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LD271322 [Editorial Report]

Saudi Break in Relations With Iran

Saudi Arabia has decided to sever diplomatic relations with Iran and has asked Iranian diplomatic staff in Riyadh and Jeddah to leave the Kingdom within 1 week, the Saudi Foreign Ministry announced in a memorandum broadcast by Riyadh television 26 April. Saudi Arabia previously adopted "self-restraint" in the face of Iran's "hostile" stands and "misdeeds," the statement said, but Saudi attempts to normalize relations on the basis of mutual respect were rebuffed by the Iranian side. The "hostile" Iranian actions cited by the Saudi communique included the sacking of the Saudi Embassy in Tehran following the "riots, sedition, and dissension" by Iranian pilgrims in Mecca during the 1987 hajj, as well as the smuggling of explosives into the Kingdom during the 1986 hajj. The communique also linked the Saudi decision with Iran's obstruction of shipping coming to and from Saudi ports and with "other acts of terrorism and sabotage."

Responding to the Saudi move, an Iranian Foreign Ministry statement carried by Tehran radio accused the "Hijaz" regime of seeking to divert attention from its policy of "preventing" Iranian pilgrims from attending the hajj ceremonies this year. The statement accused Saudi Arabia of collaborating with U.S. "conspiracies" in the Persian Gulf and of adopting a "special role" in carrying out White House projects aimed at increasing "U.S. hegemony" over the Gulf. Tehran radio also cited the view of "diplomats" that the Saudi announcement is an attempt to calm tension in the U.S. Congress over the Kingdom's purchase of Chinese missiles. In Vienna, the Iranian deputy oil minister told AFP that the Saudi decision was the result of U.S. "pressure."

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Iran cannot continue shelling Iraqi cities without a "violent and comprehensive" Iraqi retaliation, the Iraqi command warned in a communique broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio. The communique accused Iran of further shelling of residential areas in Basra, Al-Sulaymaniyah, and Darband-i Khan, adding that that this is a "flagrant violation" of the principles on which Iraq based its moratorium on bombing Iranian cities. However, an Iranian spokesman cited by IRNA denied the Iraqi charge, asserting that such "baseless allegations" are aimed at preparing the way for a resumption of Iraqi attacks on Iranian civilian areas. A Tehran radio commentary viewed the announcement that Iraq has tested new long-range missiles as an indication that Iraq is intent on perpetrating "greater crimes" and as further evidence of superpower support for the Iraqi regime. Iran must respond by swiftly sending forces to the battlefronts and by taking the issue of the war "very seriously," the radio added.

Israel

Casualties in Border Clash—Two IDF soldiers were killed and two others wounded in a clash with a "terrorist" squad which tried to penetrate Israeli territory from eastern Lebanon, the IDF spokesman announced in a statement cited by Jerusalem radio. The three intruders were killed by the Israeli force, which attacked them after detecting and chasing them on the western slopes of Mount Hermon. Commenting on the clash in an interview with the radio, Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin confirmed that one of the Israelis killed was a battalion commander, and he said there has been an increasing number of attempts to infiltrate the border from Lebanon during recent months.

The Palestine Liberation Front claimed responsibility for the infiltration attempt in a statement cited by Radio Monte Carlo, asserting that its fighters clashed with Israeli soldiers during the "Martyr Khalil al-Wazir" operation. However, the IDF chief of staff said the infiltrators were called the "Bayta squad" and their name was not connected with Al-Wazir, according to Jerusalem radio.

As for Israel's support for the South Lebanese Army (SLA), the SLA's Voice of Hope radio noted that Uri Lubrani and other Israeli officials accompanied SLA commanders on a tour of Jazzin 26 April. Lubrani, the coordinator of Israeli activities in Lebanon, assured local leaders that there are no plans for the SLA to withdraw from Jazzin.

Occupied Territories—The IDF is checking reports that an Arab girl was shot dead by soldiers during a clash in the Tulkarm district the night of 26 April, Jerusalem radio reported. The radio also noted that riots in the Gaza Strip were dispersed with tear gas 27 April. Earlier, THE JERUSALEM POST disclosed that the IDF operation to confiscate ID cards of some adult males in Gaza refugee camps will be extended to other areas and may lead to the confinement of "tens of thousands" of residents inside the Gaza Strip. Residents seeking the return of their ID cards will have to obtain official proof that they have paid all taxes and municipal bills, and that they have no outstanding traffic or other violations.

Measures Against Journalists—The Government Press Office suspended the press cards of NBC's Martin Fletcher and THE WASHINGTON POST's Glenn Frankel because they reported details of Israel's alleged role in the murder of Al-Wazir without permission from the military censor, Jerusalem radio noted.

PLO Affairs

Results of Damascus Talks—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad was "extremely emotional and warm," and it paved the way for a "complete normalization" of Syrian-Palestinian relations, according to Palestinian

officials cited by the JORDAN TIMES. PFLP leader George Habash told Radio Monte Carlo that the talks closed a "loophole" concerning PLO alliances on the Arab level and left the PLO in a "sound" position. However, he said it would be a mistake to believe that one meeting could resolve all differences between 'Arafat and Al-Asad, and he noted that there were a number of issues on which differences arose. According to Habash, the talks focused on the need for a unified PLO-Syrian stand in support of the Palestinian "uprising," and other issues were deferred to special joint committees which will follow up the 'Arafat-Al-Asad summit. Habash also noted that the next PNC may be held in Damascus, attended by "all" Palestinian factions.

A related Radio Monte Carlo report disclosed that four Fatah Central Committee members remained in Damascus to continue the contacts with Syria and agree on the details of joint Syrian-Palestinian action. The radio also revealed that 'Arafat held talks with PNSF official Samih Abu Kuwayk during his stay in Damascus. As for 'Arafat's whereabouts after leaving Syria, Baghdad Voice of the PLO radio reported his arrival in Baghdad the evening of 26 April.

Allegation Against U.S.—"Informed diplomatic sources" cited by the Paris publication AL-WIFAQ AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI alleged that the United States colluded with Israel in the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, claiming that a 6th Fleet ship and helicopter were involved in the transportation of Mosad agents to Tunisia for the operation.

Libya-Egypt

JANA reported that all telephone and telegram links with Egypt have been opened to enable Libyans and Egyptians to get in touch with one another more easily.

Afghanistan

The government is considering creating a demilitarized zone in the provinces bordering Pakistan to facilitate the return of Afghan refugees, President Najibullah announced at a Kabul meeting, and urged Pakistan to follow suit along its border. The meeting, reported by BAKHTAR, marked the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution.

On the occasion of the anniversary, Najibullah issued decrees on remitting and reducing prisoners' sentences, Kabul radio noted. Prisoners exempted from punishment under the decrees include military deserters and draft dodgers who report for service; foreign citizens who have completed one-third of their sentences; and those sentenced in absentia who voluntarily return to the country within 3 months. Death sentences will be commuted to 20 years imprisonment and sentences exceeding 10 years will be halved under the decrees.

A Soviet Government statement on the Geneva accords carried by TASS reaffirmed that the Soviet troop withdrawal will begin 15 May and conclude "not later than February 15, 1989." The statement asserted that the troop withdrawal, as well as other provisions of the Geneva accords, are irreversible. The statement also called on Pakistan to "have its weighty say" on the presence and assistance of groups conducting subversive activities against Afghanistan, in accordance with the agreement.

Meanwhile, a car bomb exploded near Kabul's busy commercial district 27 April, according to AFP, which added that no details on casualties were available. An earlier KYODO report cited Pakistani journalists who said the border at Towr Kham was closed after "fierce" fighting between Afghan government troops and mujahidin. However, Afghan border guards cited by the agency claimed the closure was ordered by the government in connection with the 10th anniversary celebrations.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Syria, Libya, Algeria, PLO To Meet 'Next Month'

JN261210 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1025 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Al-Shariqah, 26 Apr (WAKH)—Informed Syrian and Palestinian sources have said that a quadripartite Arab summit will be held in Libya next month to be attended by the leaders of Syria, Libya, Algeria, and the PLO.

The newspaper AL-KHALIJ published in Al-Shariqah today cited these sources as saying that the quadripartite summit, which was agreed upon during the reconciliation contacts between Syria and the PLO leadership, will be held before the 29 May Gorbachev-Reagan summit in Moscow. The sources added that the summit will center on discussing the future of relations between Egypt and the three Arab countries and the PLO to reach a unified stand to be presented to the emergency Arab summit scheduled for June in Algeria.

The sources indicated that the resolving of Syrian-Palestinian differences regarding the PLO's relations with Egypt will be postponed to the quadripartite summit. It has been agreed during the current contacts in Damascus to draw up a unified policy on this issue.

The sources disclosed that Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam informed the PNSF leaders that Syria does not want to intervene in internal PLO organizational affairs, which it considers an internal Palestinian matter.

The sources explained Khaddam's affirmation of this stand as an indirect call on the PNSF factions to continue their dialogue with the PLO leadership to complete Palestinian unity. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

PFLP's Habash on Syria-PLO Talks

JN261924 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1735 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Interview with PFLP leader George Habash by Louis Faris in Damascus; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Faris] Dr George Habash, it is well known that both before and after the PNC session in Algiers, you exerted efforts for the restoration of the Palestinian-Syrian alliance. How do you evaluate the results of Mr 'Arafat's visit to Syria?

[Habash] Our evaluation of the PNC results is that they affirmed the Palestinian principles clearly and accurately. They fixed the PLO alliances on the international level. A loophole remained concerning PLO alliances on the Arab level. The talks held in Damascus between the PLO and President al-Asad have closed this loophole. Therefore, we now are greatly satisfied because the PLO is now in a sound position on Palestinian, Arab, and international levels. It is absolutely unnatural for the negative ties to continue between two major national powers in the struggle against the Zionist and imperialist enemy.

God be praised, the loophole is now closed. Therefore I believe our Palestinian masses, the Arab national liberation groups, the Arab masses, and our friends on the international level are now very pleased and satisfied. We all know that the restoration of normal relations between the PLO and Syria was a demand of all the progressive and national forces and of all our international friends, led by the Eastern bloc countries and the USSR. Hence our great satisfaction.

[Faris] Dr Habash, are there still political differences between Mr 'Arafat and Syria in light of the meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad? Do you expect these differences to be tackled? I allude in particular to relations with Egypt.

[Habash] In fact we make a mistake if we think one meeting will solve all differences between 'Arafat and the Fatah Central Committee on one hand and Syria on the other. There were a number of issues on which differences arose. As I understand, President al-Asad wanted to concentrate on the issues under discussion. Hence, Al-Asad as well as the PLO and the brothers in Fatah wanted to concentrate on the uprising—supporting it, providing it with political backing, seeing how this uprising can influence Arab conditions and how a unified Palestinan-Syrian stand can be effected in the upcoming Arab summit.

Emphasis was laid on points of agreement, but we should know that if we want a sound and strategic alliance between the PLO and Syria, we should agree on a number of other political issues. The subject of Egypt in particular assumes special significance. We cannot [words indistinct] that the alliance with Syria will make the PLO consider its alliance to be the springboard and the axis on which to define [words indistinct]. What is important now is that the door of dialogue has been opened. The door had been closed and it is now open. Through many sessions of talks we will reach a sound position on the common denominators on all issues, be they are related to Egypt, to Lebanon, to the issue of Palestinian factions outside the PLO, or to any other issue.

[Faris] How will the Syrian-Palestinian dialogue continue?

[Habash] As we learned from our brothers in Fatah, the president, after speaking about the uprising and the need to protect, support, and back it and about the stand which should be taken in the upcoming Arab summit, he said there are a number of issues which he would defer to specialized committees. Indeed, we in the Palestinian

leadership considered this issue. The PLO and the Fatah Central Committee appointed brothers and comrades who will follow up this issue.

I know that the Syrian side [word indistinct] will pursue the subject through Comrade Abu Jamal, the vice president [not further identified], Comrade Faruq al-Shar', and perhaps other brothers. [Words indistinct] the positive results which were obtained as a result of the meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and the Fatah Central Committee with the brother president.

[Faris] Do you expect a PNC session to be held in Damascus shortly with the participation of all Palestinian factions?

[Habash] This is necessary. In principle, a PNC session should be held in the near future because in accordance with PNC bylaws a new session should be held every year. We are aware that the previous session was held in 1987. Therefore, we are supposed to seriously consider the convening of a new session. Another point is that the uprising requires a PNC session, not only from the morale consideration but because the uprising is an occasion to revolutionize PLO conditions. The uprising itself requires a PNC session.

Finally, there are new positive relations with Syria. How beautiful it will be if an executive PNC session is held in Damascus to be attended by all Palestinian factions, because this will be the biggest gift one can give to the people of the uprising and to all the Palestinian masses everywhere.

[Faris] In your view, what are the effects of all these developments, especially Syrian-Palestinian relations, on the uprising in the occupied territory?

[Habash] In more than one statement, the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising called on the PLO and Syria to normalize relations to pave the way for establishing a strategic alliance between Syria and the PLO. So far, experience has shown that the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising enjoys a high level of political awareness. It has realized that political revolutionizing of the uprising requires improving, normalizing, and strengthening relations between the PLO and Syria. Therefore, in more than one statement, the leadership expressed the desire and stressed the need for improving these relations.

Therefore, it is natural that our masses and the uprising leadership should consider what happened in Damascus an achievement of the uprising. In the statement before last, the uprising defined its own achievements in terms of its effects on Israel, on the Zionist movement, on the Israeli economy, and on the state of confusion among the Israeli rulers. Now, the leadership of the uprising can record in a future statement that one of its achievements was the restoration of the Syrian-Palestinian alliance and all the effects on the Arab level this alliance will create. Frankly speaking, the restoration of the Syrian-PLO alliance will not be confined within present limits. This will be followed by the restoration of the triangle of steadfastness. It will be followed by creating a new pan-Arab incubator for the uprising, by activating the Arab streets, and by a number of developments enabling us to exploit the glorious uprising on the national political level. Therefore, this achievement, which took place this week, is the achievement of the uprising and the masses of the uprising.

PFLP-GC's Jibril on Unity, Uprising

JN251459 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1314 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Speech by PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril at the Palestinian Arab Club in the Al-Yarmuk camp in Damascus on the 23d PFLP-GC anniversary on 15 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of Almighty God, sisters, brothers, and comrades-in-arms, we meet today on the 23d anniversary of the contemporary Palestinian revolution. [passage omitted]

Ever since we met on the base of the PLO in 1968, brothers and sisters, we drew up a political program and we said we will meet and agree on such a program. That program is the Palestine National Charter. [applause] In 1968 the PLO had a charter, for the PLO was established in 1964. However, we did not acquiesce to that charter because the PLO grew up in the bosom of Arab summits and under Arab agreements. In 1968 we the rifle carriers said we want to unite on the base of the PLO. We said let our unity be embodied in one front. We said the charter drawn up by Al-Shuqayri several years ago may entail a measure of forfeiting our rights and that we appreciate the circumstances of the PLO's inception at the time.

We drew up the charter and said: This, brothers, defines the framework of our unity. We marched together. We hoped that that unity would become stronger and develop into one leadership. The charter began to be falsified and interpreted. In 1976 the idea of a Palestinian state began to be proposed—but with mutual recognition. The Israelis recognize us and we recognize them. That is, the Palestinian people will now recognize 72 percent of the land of Palestine [as Israeli]. It is a recognition by the people of Palestine, not a recognition by Camp David's Egypt. That is where the rot began to creep into the national unity program.

Even that aim of a Palestinian state alongside an Israeli state and mutual recognition were not realized in 1981 or 1982. They retreated from that aim and the Americans and Camp David—whether Al-Sadat or Husni Mubarak—said there is no Palestinian state and there can only be a confederation between us and King Husayn. That is how the world can give us some of our rights.

The countdown continued after that. In 1988 we say, well if they do not like a confederation with King Husayn, we will have a confederal state of Israel, Palestine, and Jordan.

I believe everyone knows our differences in this arena are not the differences they want to depict: differences over leadership or positions. After 40 years, after 70 years of fighting by the Palestinian people, ever since the Balfour Declaration, and after thousands of martyrs, do you accept that the Palestinian people will be the bridgehead of Zionism into the Arab homeland? That is what we disagreed upon, brothers, during the past period.

We differed over another issue. Some people were thinking that 23 years are enough and too much. Well, we knew we were waging a protracted struggle. Does not such a protracted struggle require true revolutionary preparation so it can continue all these years in this grueling, deadly, and difficult fight? Does it not require moral and behavioral preparation? If the revolution were for 4 or 5 years then it would not have been necessary to concentrate on such issues.

However, 23 years have passed and we shall continue to fight. Is it not necessary to make sound revolutionary and behavioral preparation for this revolution. We differed with the dominating leadership also over this behavior issue. What do you want to hand over to the next generation? If you hand them a corrupt revolution, what can you expect of the next generation that will carry the banner? I do not want to go into great detail over this issue for time is short. However, that revolutionary and behavioral issue was no less important than a clear political vision during the march

Twenty-seven years ago, when we first started the revolution, we said the Palestine question was an Arab issue, but we Palestinians must be the spearhead of the Arab nation in the direction of Palestine. Yes, we need the Arab nation. We need the Syrian people, the Lebanese people, the Iraqi people, the Jordanian people, the Yemeni people [applause], the Egyptian people [applause], the Libyan people [applause]. You all know these features. The Arab nation was generous with the Palestine question. Not just now, not just during our contemporary revolution.

In 1948, when reactionary regimes were ruling the Arab world, people walked barefoot from Libya to Palestine—and a reactionary regime was ruling Libya. In Egypt Ahmad 'Abd al-'Aziz came to Palestine. They came from the Arabian Peninsula, from Syria, from Damascus, from Hama, from Aleppo, from Iraq. They came from everywhere. They did not have money or great resources while their regimes were repressive. All these people came to fight, because these Arab masses know the Palestine question is an Arab issue and that the Zionist enemy does not threaten Palestine only but its threats and ambitions are directed against the entire Arab nation, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf. [applause]

Do you believe it is a coincidence that—14 years ago, and today we commemorate the operation in Al-Khalisah/Kiryat Shimona [phrase as heard]—the father of Nabil al-Mughrabi is sitting together with the father of Abu Shakir, the Syrian and the Palestinian are sitting together in this hall. [applause] The Palestinian father and the Syrian father from Aleppo. We had hoped that the Iraqi father, from the Euphrates, would also be with us here. They were three: a Palestinian, a Syrian, and an Iraqi. [applause] That is our concept of the struggle.

In the Umm al-'Aqarib operation they were four, in addition to a Lebanese. We were heralding the fusion of Palestinian and Lebanese blood.

Is it also a coincidence that in the recent heroic glider operation in Qibya the Palestinian was alongside the Syrian and the Tunisian from North Africa?

Al-Sadat began with the independent Egyptian decision and he signed the Camp David accords. The Lebanese decision brought the 17 May agreement. In the past 23 years these were the main issues over which the Palestinian stand was divided. It was not just our stand as a front. There were also factions and nationalist figures that shared our view on this matter, even now.

As I said to you these were the negative aspects. We will let the martyr's mother, sister, and wife, the prisoners, and all strugglers be the judge. From this platform we want to say, out of respect for the revolution of the stones, the revolution of our people in the occupied territory, [applause] that we in the PFLP-GC are prepared to wipe out that name, for we have no name other than Palestine is Arab. [applause]

We ask everyone, we ask all nationalists to enter into a dialogue. However, such a dialogue is above all based on the PLO Charter upon which we agreed in 1968. [applause] Such unity should be based on the unequivocal rejection of all U.S. settlement plans. We are prepared to have a dialogue on the basis that the Camp David regime is a regime that did not only harm the Palestinian question but also destroyed the Arab cause.

We the Palestinians cannot in any form whatsoever become the bridgehead in the direction of the Camp David regime. We must view that regime as the cause of the great disaster that struck our cause, people, and nation. We must unhesitatingly and unequivocally oppose that regime and its policy until Egypt returns to 'Abd al-Nasir's Egypt, Khalid al-Islambuli's Egypt, and Sulayman Khatir's [Egypt]. [applause]

Finally, we are ready to hold a dialogue with the nationalists as of tomorrow. We mentioned the charter of action, the PLO Charter; the rejection of the imaginary U.S. plans; and, third, a clear stand on the Camp David regime. The fourth subject is to re-educate our people or rather stop the non-nationalist culture that these leaderships are expounding to our people's masses and our

children. This non-nationalist culture says the Israeli entity is an existing reality that we must recognize, so we should initiate a dilaogue with the Zionists.

Who are these Zionists, whether from the operational parties or the chauvinistic movements present in this Zionist entity? Such dialogues with the Zionists weaken every child and every cub who will carry his weapon, since Israel is said to be an existing reality and that we should reach agreement with it. Thus, we have entered into bargaining.

As you know, the last PNC convened in 1983. As soon as that session ended—and there are some witnesses present here—the Algerian president invited us for a leadership meeting. He congratulated us on the PNC's achievements. I asked him a question: Would you like to brief us on the talks and negotiations between you and the French in Evien?

President Chadli Bendjedid said: First, those talks were top secret. We told the French that in case an announcement is made on the presence of such negoations, then these negotiations will be stopped. He addressed us: Do you know why? This is not because we hid facts from our people, but we feared the fact that if the citizens felt there were negotiations and that there was a possibility the negotiators would reach an agreement, then they would wonder why should they die. This was also meant to foil French maneuvers and keep our people engaged in their fighting and struggle.

The second subject discussed by Chadli Bendjedid was: He said the French proposed to the Algerians that they take the desert and give the mountains and the coast to the French, especially since there were fewer than 2 milion Frenchmen who had been settled on Algerian territory for 130 years. The Algerians said no. The French then said: We will give you part of the desert, the mountains, and the coast. The Algerians said: No. We will only accept a free and independent Algeria and there should be no French settler on Algerian territory. [applause]

Chadli Bendjedid said so. Some brothers who are present here are witnesses to this conversation. Brothers, we say before you that just as the national unity was shown by our stone-throwing people in Palestine, we also extend our hands to realize unity between us and the nationalists on these bases. You can ask and judge. We are telling you, unequivocally and not out of rhetoric, that as of tomorrow we are ready to remove all these names. We in the PFLP-GC canceled our name several times. What have we done for 23 years since we launched this revolution? The Palestine question has once again been discussed by everyone, friend and foe. [passage omitted]

PLF Reports Clash With Israeli Soldiers 26 Apr

JN261803 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1710 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Louis Faris dispatch from Damascus]

[Text] The military spokesman of the Palestine Liberation Front [PLF] has announced that the Front's fighters today carried out the martyr Khalil al-Wazir operation in the area of [name indistinct]. The spokesman said the fighters stormed Israeli military concentrations and waged a mobile battle with the Israeli soldiers. Israel admitted that two of its soldiers were killed and three others were wounded.

In a subsequent communique, the PLF said the clash continued from dawn until just before noon and that the Israelis used armored cars and helicopters in large-scale search operations in the area. The Front has not yet announced the number of its fighting groups or its losses.

OPEC Affairs

Ministers Prepare To Meet Non-OPEC Producers

AU261141 Paris AFP in English 1133 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Jan Kristiansen report]

[Excerpt] Vienna, April 26 (AFP)—Key ministers of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) held busy consultations in Vienna Tuesday ahead of an unprecedented meeting with seven non-OPEC producers aimed at coordinating strategies to stabilize world oil markets.

OPEC officials cautiously avoided making any predictions as to the chances for a deal with the seven—Angola, China, Colombia, Egypt, Malaysia, Mexico and Oman—on concrete steps to restrain crude oil supplies in order to bolster prices.

Ministers or senior officials of the seven non-OPEC countries were scheduled to meet a five-member OPEC ministerial "contact group" late Tuesday night at the cartel's permanent secretariat here.

OPEC's president Rilwanu Lukman, the Nigerian oil minister, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE Tuesday morning that OPEC had "not yet" received any formal or informal proposals from the non-member countries.

Asked whether he saw any willingness to cut production, he replied, "you have to wait until tomorrow."

He also said his private consultations with other ministers since his arrival here overnight had been "very fruitful" but did not elaborate.

Venezuela's Energy Minister Arturo Hernandez Grisanti, a keen advocate of cooperation among OPEC and non-OPEC producers, was also cautious in his comments as he emerged from a separate meeting with Mr Lukman.

"We will have some news tomorrow, not today," he said, adding that there had so far only been consultations rather than substantive talks.

Both Mr Lukman and Mr Hernandez said they expected Tuesday night's talks with the non-OPEC countries to be followed by another session Wednesday, before a scheduled "consultative" ministerial session of OPEC's 13 member countries on Thursday.

But Mexico's Secretary for Energy and Mining Fernando Hiriart suggested he would not be taking part in a second round of talks because of other engagements.

Officials of the other non-OPEC countries appeared to be avoiding any contact with correspondents here following reported separate contacts overnight.

Traders and other Western observers thought strains had developed between the two groups, and possibly inside each of them.

They cited indications that neither side would be willing to actually cut output and that the end-result might be no more than some form of promise by non-OPEC countries that they would not increase their crude production further over the next several months. [passage omitted]

OPECNA Interviews Lukman

LD261756 Vienna OPECNA in English 1044 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, 26 Apr. 88 (OPECNA)—OPEC conference President Alhaji Rilwanu Lukman told OPECNA Monday night that the OPEC/non-OPEC meeting starting here today had short, medium and long-term objectives.

Speaking in an exclusive interview on arrival here, the OPEC president said that in the short run, the dialogue should aim at effectively stopping the drop in oil prices.

In the medium and long terms, the dialogue should address the issue of achieving lasting oil market stability.

The OPEC president said in answer to a question that non-OPEC countries had realized that they needed cooperation with OPEC and that such cooperation was also in their own interest.

"Even with OPEC sticking to its price and production agreement, the organization could not be expected to alone carry the burden of ensuring oil market stability," Lukman pointed out.

He said it was a hopeful sign that non-OPEC oil producers were expressing their willingness to ensure market and price stability by their coming to the meeting "voluntarily and openly".

On the allegation that during his visits to London he had never expressed a desire to hold discussions with British Energy Secretary Cecil Parkinson, the OPEC president said he would be pleased to see his British counterpart, but added that the United Kingdom had consistently maintained that it was not interested in cooperation with OPEC oil producers.

Lukman said he had no objection to meeting the British energy secretary on a future visit to London.

On Nigeria's oil market performance, Lukman, also the Nigerian minister of petroleum resources, said the country's premier crude, bonny light, was "doing well", adding that Nigeria was producing its OPEC-allocated "quota".

Saudi Oil Minister's Remarks

LD262152 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1935 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, 26 Apr (SPA)—His Excellency Hisham Muhyi al-Din Nazir, minister of petroleum and mineral resources and acting minister of planning, has indicated that the meeting between OPEC membr states and other oil-producing countries outside the organization is a historic event which should not go unrecorded.

In a statement to SPA at the end of the 3-hour meeting of the OPEC ministerial committee held at the organization's headquarters in Vienna this morning he added that "the mere fact that ways of contact between the two groups were found and that the door of dialogue was opened between them is in itself a positive leap, notwithstanding the results which might come out of this meeting. We look at this meeting as the first encounter."

The minister stressed the positive aspect of this step, describing it as evidence of the importance the oil-producing countries outside the organization attach to the stability of the market and of their desire to contribute to achieve this stability. He went on to say: "This also demonstrates their appreciation of the role played by OPEC in this respect."

The meeting was attended by the ministers of petroleum and energy of Nigeria, Indonesia, Venezuela, and Algeria, in addition to Hisham Nazir and the Kuwaiti ambassador to Austria.

The ministerial committee is due to meet later this evening with oil ministers and representatives from seven countries outside the organization: Angola, China, Colombia, Egypt, Malaysia, Mexico, and the Sultanate of Oman.

Non-OPEC 'Firm Proposals'

LD270730 Vienna OPECNA in English 0108 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, 27 Apr. 88 (OPECNA)—OPEC conference President Alhaji Rilwanu Lukman told OPECNA this morning that there had been a "good start" to the dialogue between OPEC and non-OPEC countries which started late Tuesday night.

Speaking at the end of the first round of talks here, Lukman said there had been "firm proposals" from the non-OPEC participants.

These proposals would now be considered before another round of talks Wednesday "with a view to eventually finalizing the recommendations which would go to the OPEC consultative meeting" scheduled to start Thursday.

According to official sources, two meetings are scheduled for later today. The OPEC Price Committee will hold its meeting first, to be followed by the resumed OPEC/Non-OPEC joint session.

The OPEC president said that during the first round of talks Tuesday between OPEC and non-OPEC producers, the discussions were "frank" and cordial.

"There was a willingness on both sides to cooperate in the achievement of a common goal," the president said.

OPEC was represented at the talks by the OPEC Price Committee comprising Algeria, Indonesia, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, while non-OPEC participants were Angola, China, Colombia, Egypt, Malaysia, Mexico and Oman.

Non-OPEC Cuts Considered

LD270757 Tehran IRNA in English 0742 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, April 27, IRNA—Seven oil producers outside the OPEC here for a first concerted move with OPEC to push up oil prices, said Wednesday they are ready to cut exports by 200,000 to 250,000 barrels per day.

Nigerian oil minister Alhaj Rilwanu Lukman who represented OPEC in the joint session with non-OPEC producers Egypt, Oman, Malaysia, China, Mexico, Colombia, and Angola Wednesday said that they welcomed his proposal to cut production.

Mexican Minister of Energy, Mines and Industry Alfredo Gonzalez speaking on behalf of the seven non-OPEC producers said they were ready for a 5 percent production cut. The decisions of the session will be forwarded to a session of 13 OPEC members for deliberation here Thursday.

Non-OPEC producers are to sit together twice on Wednesday.

Venezuelan Energy and Mines Minsiter Arturo Hernandez Grisanti here Tuesday night criticized U.S. Energy Secretary John Herrington for his critical views of OPEC and said that petroleum exporting countries mean to stabilize oil prices which situation, he said, will benefit all countries including the United States.

OPEC ministers are to sit at a deliberative session here Thursday.

Venezuelan Minister Comments

LD270810 Vienna OPECNA in English 2240 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, 26 Apr. 88 (OPECNA)—Venezuelan Minister of Mines and Energy Dr Arturo Hernandez Grisanti tonight expressed astonishment at U.S. Energy Secretary John Herrington's "aggressive attack on OPEC".

Speaking to reporters on arrival to the OPEC/Non-OPEC meeting at the OPEC Secretariat tonight, the minister said: "It is OPEC's effort to stabilize the oil market and adjust the level of oil prices. OPEC is not against anybody," he noted.

The stabilization of the oil market is to everybody's benefit, including the consumers, both in the medium and long terms, he stated.

He said the OPEC effort would be in the interest of both producers and consumers and "even the United States itself where the oil production costs are the highest in the world."

Since 1985, U.S. production had fallen by one million b/d [barrels per day], he said.

Between 1985 and 1986, proven U.S. reserves had declined by 13.6 percent, or from 28.42 billion barrels to 24.56 billion barrels.

Earlier, REUTER quoted U.S. Energy Department Spokesman Doug Elmets as saying that during his visit to Far Eastern oil producing countries last week, Herrington had tried to persuade them to reject OPEC efforts to strengthen oil prices.

"We believe in a free market and we do not believe in assisting OPEC," Elmets said.

South Asian Regional Affairs

Keshtmand Addresses Environmental Meeting

LD260827 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0509 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 25, BAKHTAR—The fourth governing council meeting of South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP) was opened here today with the inaugurating speech of Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan.

At the outset of the session Farid Zarif, deputy foreign minister of the Republic of Afghanistan on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan welcomed the arrival of the (?delegations) of the South Asian countries and the international organisations to Kabul to

participate in the meeting and talked briefly about the programme of the fourth governing council meeting of South Asia Environmental Cooperative.

Then Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand opened the work of the session by delivering a speech.

Inder Pal Khosla, ambassador of India to Kabul on behalf of chairman of the 3d governing council meeting of (SACEP) and the Indian delegation spoke on the significance of preservation and protection of environment and the holding of the fourth governing council meeting of South Asia cooperative environment programme. The Indian ambassador pointed to the role of India in preservation and protection of environment as well.

Likewise, Muhammad Ja'far Kazem, director of SACEP in his speech emphasized on the regional cooperation in the field of environment protection and demanded that the countries which have financial and technical possibilities to help the countries of the region in protection and preservation of environment.

The participants of the session elected Fatah Muhammad Tarin, minister of light industries and foodstuffs of the Republic of Afghanistan as chairman of the fourth session of SACEP.

Apart from delegates from the members countries of SACEP and international organisations some members of the Council of Ministers, representatives of social organisations and accredited ambassadors in Kabul took part in the opening session of the fourth meeting of SACEP countries.

The conference will last two days.

Algeria

President Receives Mauritanian Foreign Minister

LD261748 Algiers APS in English 1000 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers, 26/4/88 (APS)—President Chadli Bendjedid received Monday here the Commander Mohamed Lemine Ould N'Diayane foreign affairs and cooperation minister in the Islamic Republic Mauritania.

Commander Ould N'Diayane handed on this occasion a message to the head of state from the Mauritanian President Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya.

Talks dealt with the bilateral relations and the situation in the Maghreb.

After this audience, Commander Ould N'Diayane stated to the press that the message handed to President Bendjedid comes in the frame of the exchange of views between the two head of states on regional and international issues of common interest.

Chad

Foreign Minister Leaves for Burkina Faso

AB2604194188 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Gouara Lassou, head of Chadian diplomacy, left Ndjamena this morning for Ouagadougou, the Burkinabe capital. The foreign minister will deliver a message from the head of state, El Hadj Hissein Habre, to the Burkinabe head of state and chairman of the Popular Front, Blaise Compaore.

Opposition Group Rejects Goukouni Government

AB2604172788 Paris AFP in French 1558 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Ouagadougou, 25 Apr (AFP)—The Revolutionary Democratic Council (CDR—one faction of the Chadian opposition) "states that in no way will it participate in the new government formed on 23 April, 1988 in Tripoli" by Goukouni Oueddei, former president of GUNT. The CDR's decision is contained in a communique given to the press by Youssef Maina, CDR's secretary for information and propaganda, resident in Ouagadougou. The document points out that that government was "formed under the auspices of forces outside Chad and is contested by all Chadian patriotic forces."

The CDR states in its communique that it is abiding by the Cotonou agreement, which was updated in Ouagadougou, and continues to support all signatories to the accord. The CDR also appeals to all militants to mobilize to "counteract this evil plan, which seeks to liquidate genuine nationalist forces."

Egypt

Mubarak Calls Shamir Responses 'Propaganda'

NC261231 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1212 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Cairo, 26 Apr (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak answered newsmen's questions today following the inauguration of the National Military Museum in the Citadel. He said officials in any country take an interest in their heritage. This is history for the coming generations. We cannot obliterate history; we must document and register it with museums. [passage omitted]

Responding to a question about Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's election program and its negative responses, Mubarak said: We must seek to convene an international conference and discuss these responses and other issues. There is no such thing as absolute rejection. These are propaganda ploys intended to instill a spirit of despair concerning resolution of the issue. The important thing is that the parties concerned must agree or there will be no reason to attempt to solve it.

PNC Member Denies Freezing of PLO Ties

NC271004 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0915 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 27 Apr (MENA)—PNC member Sa'id Kamal has affirmed that relations between Egypt and the PLO are steadfast and strong and that there is full coordination between the two sides. He noted that the recent visit to Syria by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat did not have a negative impact on these relations.

In a statement to MENA today, Kamal denied reports carried by some Western news agencies and published in some papers that during his talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad 'Arafat agreed to freeze the PLO's relations with Egypt. Kamal denounced attempts by the Western media to distort Egyptian-Palestinian relations.

He added: The objective of 'Arafat's visit to Damascus was to end Palestinian-Syrian differences, reach a unified Arab stand with respect to international endeavors to convene an international conference for peace, and to close Arab ranks in support of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories until it fulfills the Palestinian aspiration for national independence and their right to self-determination on national Palestinian soil.

Organization's Subversive Activities Detailed

NC261921 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1718 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Cairo, 26 Apr (MENA)—Today, the Higher State Security Criminal Court adjourned until 3 May the trial of the defendants in the case of the 'Those Delivered From the Fire' organization. [passage omitted]

Al-Jizah District Attorney Counsellor Mahir al-Jindi disclosed that the security authorities have received information indicating that some of this organization's members had sought to procure arms and explosives, which they had intended to use in implementing their goals and plans.

Al-Jindi added that the security authorities managed to seize a large number of dangerous organizational documents, which reveal the names of the organization's leaders and members, as well as the organization's scope of activities, interim plans, and strategic goals. He pointed out that one of these goals was the overthrow of the present regime.

Al-Jindi also revealed that the security authorities had seized a number of maps and documents, which exposed the organization's scheme to subvert the state's vital installations and to free some Al-Jihad members currently being detained in prison. The documents also included information on movements of the state's top officials within the framework of the organization's plan to assassinate them.

Al-Jindi pointed out that this organization had adopted the Khomeyniite system as its basic ideology and doctrine. He added that the organization's documents reveal the methods by which its members are given practical and theoretical training. [passage omitted]

Official Talks Begin With CSSR Delegation

NC261520 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Cairo, 26 Apr (MENA)—Official talks between Egypt and the CSSR began this morning under the chairmanship of Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Bohuslav Chnoupek, Czechoslovak minister of foreign affairs.

The Egyptian delegation to the talks included: Ahmad Hatatah, Mahmud Fathi, Muhab Muqbil, and Ahmad Mahir, ambassadors at the Foreign Ministry; and Foreign Ministry Counselor Salah Salim.

The Czechoslovak side included: Suja, Emilos, Puchinak, and Vatcek, ambassadors at the Foreign Ministry; Adviser Kortosh [names and title as received]; and Milos Vesely, CSSR ambassador in Cairo.

The CSSR foreign minister arrived in Cairo last night for a 3-day visit to Egypt.

Following the 2-hour talks, Bohuslav Chnoupek stated that the Czechoslovak viewpoint is identical to Egypt's regarding the settlement of regional disputes, foremost being the Middle East crisis, the Iraq-Iran war, and the general situation in the Gulf.

He added that Egypt and the CSSR also have identical views concerning the resolution of the Afghan issue and the withdrawal of Soviets forces from Afghanistan in the near future.

The Czechoslovak foreign minister added that he is carrying a message from the general secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia to President Husni Mubarak.

Bohuslav Chnoupek described the Egypian-Czechoslovak talks as having been an opportunity to assert the CSSR's position on cooperation with Egypt, and to open new prospects for bilateral relations extending from their long-standing relations. He noted the role which Czechoslovakia played in the 1950's and its contribution to the establishment of numerous projects in Egypt, in addition to its support for Egypt's position on liberty and stability.

The CSSR foreign minister emphasized the need to have a regular joint dialogue between the two countries and to promote bilateral relations. He expressed hope for a meeting between the Egyptian and Czechoslovak prime ministers in order to increase bilateral cooperation, particularly in the economic field.

Within this context, Chnoupek disclosed that Czechoslovakia is currently undergoing economic reform, which is opening the way for the establishment of joint ventures and trade. He underlined his country's concern for increasing imports from Egypt and for enhancing cooperation between the two countries in cultural and educational spheres.

Commenting on his country's foreign policy, Chnoupek said Czechoslovakia is participating with the Eastern bloc in working toward an end to escalating international violence, perpetuation of peace, disarmament, and elimination of nuclear missiles in an attempt to free the world from nuclear hazards by the year 2000.

The Czechoslovak minister concluded his statement by expressing optimism that his current visit to Egypt will yield good results.

In a similar statement following the talks, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid asserted that Egypt is eager to strengthen its relations with Czechoslovakia, and to promote joint economic, political, and cultural cooperation. He added: Our relations with Czechoslovakia are friendly and cordial.

In their talks today, which were conducted in an atmosphere of understanding and cordiality, the Egyptian and Czechoslovak sides discussed bilateral relations and international issues of mutual interest.

President Husni Mubarak and Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi are scheduled to receive the Czechoslovak foreign minister on Wednesday.

Abu Ghazalah Cited on Memorandum With U.S.
JN261719 Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic
24 Apr 88 pp 5-11

[Interview with Field Marshal 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production, by Salah Muntasir on 18 April; place not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The main subject I wanted to hear about in full detail from Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim abu Ghazalah was the "memorandum of understanding," that was signed recently during his latest visit to Washington. Some opposition papers have described the memorandum as a crime committed in the dark, and portrayed its results as evil and sinful, threatening Egypt's independence and undermining its sovereignty.

[Muntasir] Why Field Marshal? Why this memo? What does it contain? What do we get in return? What will Egypt get, and what will the United States take from Egypt? What are the secret clauses, which people say have been concealed? Field Marshal, where do I begin?

He said with a confident smile that reassures you of his honesty and candor: You can begin with any question. We have nothing to hide or that we fear to announce.

I said: First, is it an agreement, or a memorandum of understanding?

He said: It is not an agreement because an agreement would be binding on both sides and would have to be approved by the legal institutions of each country. It has to be approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives in the United States, and the People's Assembly in Egypt. A memorandum of understanding is different. It is a formula expressing the desire of both countries to cooperate in certain fields.

[Muntasir] Such as?

He said: Such as obtaining the best weapons that the United States offers to other friendly countries, permiting Egypt to bid for contracts in the United States for manufacturing and exporting military hardware, and facilitating cooperation between Egyptian and U.S. scientists in military research to jointly produce new types of weapons.

I said the next question that comes to mind is: Do we have the capability to cooperate with the United States in military research, knowing how advanced they already are?

The field marshal said: For your information, the Egyptian Armed Forces has a considerable number of excellent military scientists. All they need is the experience of the vast research work done in the United States. Their participation with U.S. scientists in this research will definitely lead to the creation of work by teams of Egyptian scientists who specialize in integrated military production. This is a major goal.

Furthermore, Egypt itself has reached an advanced stage of military production, which everyone recognizes. The whole world knows that Egypt has a strong base for war industries. We produce aircraft, tanks, guns, rifles, missiles, and many types of weapons and ammunition. The United States' agreement to sign the memorandum of understanding, which provides for mutual cooperation in military research and production, should be viewed as great recognition of our scientists and the standard of our industries. We would not have gotten this U.S. privilege had we not attained that high standard.

I said: Why do you call it a privilege?

The field marshal said: Because it gives our scientists the opportunity to engage in very costly high-level research work, which I cannot afford. It also enables me to sell some Egyptian military hardware to the United States, as the memorandum of understanding indicates.

I said: Field Marshal, does the United States need our products?

He quickly said: Does the United States need Japanese cars? U.S. plants, if they want, can produce all the cars the United States needs. In spite of this, Japan has entered into the U.S. market and has imposed itself with cheap prices and the quality of its products.

I said: What can we sell to the United States?

The field marshal said: First of all, we must understand that if the weapons and military hardware any armed forces possess are not developed, then these armed forces will not be able to perform their duties as they should in terms of protecting their homeland and citizens. The biggest problem we are experiencing is that development in the sphere of armament is proceeding with great strides and has become very costly. The aircraft we used in the 1973 war are now considered very old-fashioned and obsolete in light of the progress made in terms of speed, weapons, and performance of aircraft. If the Armed Forces are to perform their national duties efficiently, they cannot lag behind. They must necessarily assimilate all aspects of progress and sophisticated weaponry.

I said: But this needs huge financial allocations?

The field marshal said: The best thing is to buy all we need. Of course, this is impossible for a country such as Egypt, which seeks to carry out reforms in all its public utilities and has a long list of development problems and projects it must tackle and implement if it is to at least maintain its standard of living in the face of this population explosion. Therefore, I must choose between two things: the needs of a people that I am duty bound to

develop and the needs of their Armed Forces to protect their independence, security, and dignity. Without these forces and their strength, development projects needed by the people cannot be implemented.

I said: But everyone knows that the United States annually gives Egypt a $1.3 billion grant that is allocated to the Armed Forces.

The field marshal said: That's why we began thinking of how to optimally use this grant within the requirements of American law. One of the conditions of this grant is that it be paid in cash and renewed annually because it is an appropriation that is incorporated into the budget every year. In recent years, we tried to increase the amount of this grant. They have promised to do this in the future, but not now. Two things have taken place in recent years: depreciation in the value of the dollar and an increase in the cost of weapons.

For example, a French Mirage 2,000 or an American F-16 cost from $23 to $24 million in fly-away condition. This price does not include weapons, ammunition, or maintenance. Naturally, a warplane without weapons or maintenance is worthless.

I said: How much does it cost to arm a plane?

He said: A well-known rule is that arming a plane equals its price. This means that if the cost of a plane is $23 million, then one needs another $23 million to arm it.

I said: As much as that?

He said: Let us take the Mirage 2,000. It is armed with two air-to-air French missiles called 530's. Each of these missiles costs $7 million. A tank now costs $1 million and is expected to reach $3 million in the nineties.

I said: Your Excellency Field Marshal, does this have anything to do with the memorandum of understanding?

The field marshal said: The purpose of the memorandum of understanding is to achieve as much benefit as possible from the $1.3 billion, which is given to me annually by the United States, and to increase and possibly double this aid in terms of the weapons and equipment that I can obtain with it. I cannot increase this aid. The only option is to increase the weapons that I buy with it.

How?

The field marshal said: Take the tank, for example. The United States says that it cannot give me the aid in cash, but in the form of products. With regard to the tank, I told the United States that Egyptian factories can produce some parts of the tank for U.S. factories, that the price of these parts will be deducted from the price of the tank, and that instead of buying 50 tanks, I can buy 60 or 70 tanks. As a result, I benefit from my factories, double my purchases, and make a profit operating Egptian war industries.

I said: Will we reveal a militry secret if I ask you about those parts of the tank that Egypt can produce for the United States?

The field marshal said: Take the track, for example. The track of a tank consists of 400 pieces. The United States produces 44 tanks per month. This means that it needs 16,000 pieces per month. If I export only 1,000 pieces per month, I can benefit greatly from U.S. aid to Egypt. In addition, the price of any part I export to the United States will depend on the price I pay for the tank.

I said: But you will buy a complete tank?

The field marshal said: Let us assume we are talking about a tank or any other weapon. There will be a detailed list of the components of the tank or other weapon, as well as the price of each part or component. This means that the price of any part will be known. When I produce a certain part, the price of that part will be determined in accordance with the price on the detailed list of components. I believe this is significant because wages in Egypt are less than they are in the United States.

The field marshal said: In fact, I have reached an agreement with the United States. Under the agreement, Egypt will manufacture the tank known as the M-1. This agreement is outside the framework of the memorandum of understanding. Why don't I sell the United States parts for this tank? In manufacturing something, any factory needs to import thousands of parts from other factories. This tank consists of 800 parts and our military factories have obtained a license to manufacture a type of radar made by the Westinghouse Company in the United States.

Why don't I sell this radar to the United States? Those who believe our factories cannot sell certain products to the United States know nothing of the standard we have reached, especially since we will open an important factory at the end of this year. It is the "strategic steel factory." The production of a large number of weapons, such as the gun, needs a certain kind of steel, the strongest kind. We used to import this kind of steel, but at the end of this year we will produce it for the first time. This will enable us to produce any equipment made with this steel for any part of the world. In fact, this is a great step that will promote Egyptian products.

I said: Field Marshal, let us go back to the memorandum of understanding. What I understood is that this memorandum first of all stipulates that cooperation will take place between our scientists and their scientists in the field of joint research.

Second, it opens the U.S. market to the products of our war industries through participation in the bids which take place there. This will make us improve the way we use the U.S. grant that is allocated for military assistance.

The field marshal said: The memorandum of understanding also allows us to obtain the latest sophisticated weapons, which the United State only gives to NATO countries. Of course, these weapons will be highly sophisticated, particularly following the INF agreement that was signed between Washington and Moscow. As a result of this agreement, the United States finds it necessary to supply NATO countries with very sophisticated weapons to reassure these countries that they can confront the Warsaw Pact following the INF agreement.

I said: What some cannot understand is how we are getting NATO weapons without being members of this alliance. Some ask why?

The field marshal said: Of what use is friendship between countries if it cannot be substantiated in such a manner? When we speak about Egyptian-U.S. friendship, this means the strong side must assist the weak side. Otherwise, what is the use of such a friendship? After all, Egypt is not the only country in this respect. There are countries that are not members of NATO that have obtained this privilege. From this premise, we asked the United States to give us the same treatment. Why should we always assume that there is a price to pay for such things, such as allowing the United States to have bases here and there? Who in this world can conceal the presence of a foreign base on his territory in light of sophisticated air reconnaissance systems and aerial photography? [passage omitted]

I went back to the memorandum of understanding. I met the field marshal last Monday; the Egyptian papers had already published the text of this memorandum. The opposition papers expressed skepticism over the memorandum, and anyone who reads what they wrote imagines there are secret provisions in it that give the United States bases or other privileges.

The question of secret provisions crops up on every occasion, particularly with respect to any agreement concluded by Egypt with any country, especially the United States.

Why this skepticism on the presence of secret agreements? Is it because Egypt dealt with the USSR in secret for a long time? At one time, there was an agreement that no one knew about. This agreement stipulated that a Soviet expert should be present at every Egyptian military center and that he had the right to make decisions. At the same time, the Egyptian commander of this center alone was responsible for any mistake resulting from the implementation of the Soviet expert's decision. Perhaps, the circumstances and state of affairs which used to exist during the 'Abd al-Nasir era justified such an agreement. Do these circumstances exist now and can one compare the two eras?

I said to Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah: What makes those who speak about secret provisions in the memorandum of understanding think this way?

The field marshal laughed, then said: I would like to put this question to you. However, first let me say this:

1. We in Egypt have been trying for 4 years to conclude this memorandum because Israel signed such an agreement many years ago. It succeeded in obtaining many advantages through this agreement. We are duty bound to benefit from all that the others do.

2. I did not sign this memorandum in Washington on the spur of the moment, and it was not a personal initiative. Before I left for Washington, the memorandum was sent to the Foreign Ministry where legal experts reviewed it.

3. Following the Foreign Ministry's review of this memorandum, President Mubarak ordered the formation of a committee of legal experts, which reviewed the Arabic and English texts of this memorandum.

4. When I left for Washington to sign this memorandum, a group of seven experts accompanied me and participated in the meetings I held in Washington.

5. Following my return, the memorandum was distributed to all branches of the Armed Forces.

Can there be secret provisions in a memorandum that has been reviewed by so many parties? Can this take place in a democratic country?

I said to the field marshal: I cannot ignore what is happening in the region. What is taking place between Iraq and Iran in the Gulf is serious. There is presently an emphasis on Egyptian security being linked to that of the Gulf?

Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah said: The question of Egypt's security being linked to that of the Gulf is not new. I have said this many times in the past and emphasized it because pan-Arab security means not only military security. It also consists of economic, political, and social security. Anyone who studies Egypt's relationship with the Gulf countries will necessarily realize that it has an economic aspect—millions of Egyptian workers and the oil that passes through the Suez Canal.

Apart from this, the Arabian Gulf countries are part of the Arab nation and, God forbid, if Iran succeeds in controlling the Gulf, what will happen to the Palestinian cause?

The Gulf countries are an Arab force. They are also an economic power. The security of the Gulf countries is completely linked to that of Egypt.

I said: To what extent could Egypt support the Gulf if it is endangered?

The field marshal said: The duty of the Egyptian Armed Forces is to be always ready. Any decision affecting the Armed Forces will necessarily be made by the political leadership and will be communicated to the constitutional bodies.

I said: The sudden flareup of the war of cities between Iraq and Iran gives the impression there was an advance agreement by the two sides to simultaneously ignite this war, and that the two countries have an ample stock of missiles?

The field marshal said: One cannot say that the war of cities between the two countries flared up at the same time. Iraq has had these missiles for a long time. The Iranians knew that Iraq had these missiles, but did not want to use them to start a war of cities which would inflict civilian casualties. However, Iran obtained similar missiles from Libya and began firing them on Baghdad. Afterward, it obtained these missiles from other sources. Iraq found itself compelled to reply, particularly after Iraq developed its missiles, enabling them to reach major Iranian cities such as Tehran, Qom, and other cities

I said: Are the Iraqi missiles of the same type Iran uses?

The field marshal said: I believe so. Maybe they are of the Soviet Scud-B type, which has a 300-km range. Iraq developed this missile to make it reach Iranian cities that are more than 300 km away. This is a great achievement, in addition to the recent achievement of liberating Al-Faw. [passage omitted]

I said: Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has suddenly made statements which indicate an apparent desire for peace with Egypt, on the condition that Egypt withdraw its forces from the Libyan-Egyptian borders.

The field marshal said: This is not something new. We have heard him speak without knowing exactly what he wants. The forces we have in the Western Desert are limited in number and belong to the border guards. The number of our forces in the Western Desert has never been less than the present, even when we used to enjoy very good relations with Libya. We did not send special forces there to commit aggression against Libya, because Egypt has never thought of committing an aggression against Libya. Therefore, we believe that the purpose of these recent statements is to drive a wedge between Egypt and some countries by having them believe that we have an army standing on their borders, or they are an attempt by Al-Qadhdhafi to appease his people in light of the deteriorating economic and security situation in Libya.

I said: Is it not strange that Israel has raised a hue and cry over the missiles Saudi Arabia purchased from the PRC?

The field marshal said: While I was in Washington, they asked me about this issue. I told them that what Israel says about the Saudi missiles is very strange because there are missiles throughout the region. Israel, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, and Libya have missiles. This is not something new. What should be our major source of concern and what we should prevent is the introduction of nuclear weapons into the region. There must be cooperation to prevent nuclear weapons from being brought into the region. This can occur with the conclusion by all parties of an agreement that will allow supervision over nuclear reactors. [passage omitted]

Columnist Calls Israel's Shmir 'Terrorist'

JN252043 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 24 Apr 88 p 5

["Word of Love" column by Muhammad al-Hayawan]

[Text] Mr Shamir's problem is that he is a terrorist with the rank of prime minister. He assails Hitler at a time when his own attitudes and decisions are more horrible than those of Hitler. Shamir only thinks of killing and deporting Arabs, so he who refuses to depart the occupied territory should be ready for death. Moreover, Shamir is under the illusion that Israel always triumphs. However, his calculations omit the [1973] October war and his own failure in Lebanon. He also ignores his gravest failure: the stone-throwing uprising, despite all the atrocities he is committing against the revolutionaries in the occupied territory.

In statements to the American TIME magazine, Shamir impudently says that Arabs have failed in all their attempts against Israel and in war, the economic boycott, and all actions against Israel. He also says the United States should search for solutions to other world problems and abandon the Middle East problem because it will not be able to do anything. Shamir adds that the United States should not pay attention to King Husayn. He also rejects the exchange of land for peace, saying this suits school children, but not Israel. Moreover, Shamir refuses to offer any peace initiative, saying any initiative should be offered by Arabs. He also asserts that Israel will not relinquish any territory and that the West Bank and Gaza inhabitants are Jordanian nationals who reject Israeli citizenship. By this, Shamir means that Arabs in the occupied territory should either leave it or be killed. This is the same old method Israel adopted to force Arabs to flee Palestine.

This may be the concept Israel has so far adopted. Israel expands, multilates, murders, and deports without being curbed. This is because Arabs are divided, fighting one another and lying in wait for each other. Israel has always lived on inter-Arab differences. Thus, whenever Arabs had differences, Israel triumphed and whenever there was inter-Arab fighting Israel was the only victor. However, when the Arabs were unified in 1973 Israel was defeated for the first time.

Our situation today is not an improvement of our previous state of affairs because some Arab parties seek to impose peace on Israel, whereas Israel rejects this since the Arabs have not yet reached minimum agreement. Meanwhile, other Arab parties are helping Israel escape the Arab call for peace—a call that has gained world support. Egypt and Jordan have taken steps and the United States and some rational Arabs have responded to these steps. However, the search for the PLO is still under way. The PLO is not joining the call for peace nor is it in agreement with Egypt, Jordan, the United States, or the Arabs. Furthermore, the PLO's stand gives Mr Shamir the opportunity to pursue his own terrorism inside and outside the occupied territory.

Libya

Arabs Urged To 'Reassess' Relations With U.S.

LD261913 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1900 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 26 Apr (JANA)—A responsible source at the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison has said the following in response to a question about the abstention by the U.S. Administration's delegate to the UN Security Council from a vote on the resolution condemning the Zionist enemy for violating Tunisian territory and murdering combatant Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]:

The U.S. abstention from the vote on the resolution adopted by the UN Security Council on 22 April 1988 condemning the terrorist action carried out by the Zionist enemy against the sovereignty of fraternal Tunisia and the assassination of the Palestinian combatant Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad, is nothing but additional proof of the disdain with which the U.S. Administration regards the will of the international community and of the U.S. Administration's enmity for the Arab nation.

This shows without doubt that the U.S. Administration is a principal partner of the Zionist enemy in its terrorist practices against the Palestinian people and the entire Arab nation. Once again it confirms that the U.S. Administration does not even regard important those Arabs it considers its friends or vital to its interests in the region.

Perhaps the best evidence of this is the signing in Washington and occupied Jerusalem of the so-called memorandum of agreement between the U.S. Administration and the Zionist enemy immediately after the perpetration of that crime. This was described as a gift from the President of the U.S. Administration to the Zionists on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the creation of so-called Israel.

The time has now come for Arabs to adopt a unified and firm stance toward U.S. policy in the region and the malicious U.S.-Zionist alliance and to seriously and collectively reassess their relations with the United States.

Communication Links With Egypt Restored

LD262110 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2030 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] JANA has learned that in affirmation of what was said by the brother leader of the revolution in his speech on the 18th anniversary of the expulsion of the British colonialist forces and bases from Libyan Arab territory, the General People's Committee for Communications and Maritime Transportation has opened all telephone and telegram links with Egypt to enable the Arab people of the Great Jamahiriyah and Egypt to get in touch with one another with greater ease.

Sudan

State Council Notifies Assembly on Resignation

JN261931 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1750 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 26 Apr (SUNA)—Today, the State Council sent a letter to members of the Constituent Assembly declaring its acceptance of the prime minister's resignation as of 1100 local time on Wednesday 11 Ramadan [27 April].

The letter said that by addressing the people's representatives, the State Council was supporting the march of democracy and strengthening its bases.

Mr Ahmad Husayn al-Rifa'i, presidential palace secretary general, handed the letter to Mr Hasan 'Abd al-Qadir, acting speaker of the Constituent Assembly.

At 1200 on Wednesday, the Constituent Assembly will begin the procedure of electing a prime minister in the presence of the chairman and members of the State Council.

In its session today, the Assembly approved a three-state draft law on the fire brigade for 1988. The deputies stressed the need to support the fire brigade.

In another development, the various political forces continued their consultations on the formation of a new government. The African bloc deputies held lengthy unilateral meetings. Later, they met with representatives

from the Democratic Unionist Party and the Al-Ummah Party. It is not yet clear whether they will nominate a candidate prime minister from the African bloc tomorrow.

Al-Mahdi Election 'Expected'

JN271100 Khartoum SUNA in English 1035 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum Apr 27 (SUNA)—The Constituent Assembly will elect here today a new prime minister to form the expected government of national reconciliation.

The election will be made in the presence of the president and members of the Council of the State who officially informed the Assembly on Premier Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's resignation which was submitted earlier this month.

Al-Mahdi, who is expected to be reelected as a prime minister is to form a national reconciliation government comprising the Al-Ummah Party, the Islamic National Party, the Democratic Unionist Party "DUP" and the southern parties.

Meanwhile, the Al-Ummah Party of Al-Mahdi confirmed its commitment to the provisions of the National Charter recently signed by all major political parties in the country.

The Al-Ummah Party further reiterated its adherence to Sudan's transitional charter and denied the allegations saying it had walked back on its commitment to the charter of the national reconciliation.

Rebels Report Military Action Near Al-Nasir

EA211051 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 20 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Another enemy attempt to reinforce his besieged garrison of Al-Nasir met with fierce resistance from SPLA forces of Unity Campaign, comprising forces of the Axis Three Headquarters, under the overall command of Commander William Nyuan Bany and the headquarters of Major General Gordon Kong Chuol.

According to our correspondent in the area, the enemy moved a force of 828 men from Malakal on 12th April 1988, in a convoy of 52 vehicles, including 323 tanks and 3 APC's supported by various artilleries, mortars, and (?MB-24) guns.

The convoy was intercepted about 30 km west of Al-Nasir on 16th April 1988 at 6:00 pm by the forces of Unity Campaign, comprising units of (Yony), (Kiyel), (Nyagat), (Much), Majnun, (Mat) One, (Gojam) and (Mat) Two battalions, under the direct overall command of Commander William Nyuan Bany, member of SPLM-SPLA Political-Military High Command, chief of staff and commander of Axis Three, and the commands of Maj Gen Gordon Kong Chuol, Brigadier Steven (Duol Chua), Colonel Peter Bol Kong, and of Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Gatwic Kuany.

The correspondent says that the battle lasted for 2 days from 16th to 17th April 1988. Eighty-seven enemy soldiers were killed, including the following: Major Yusuf Izrah, Captain Ali Unar Muhammad, Capt al-Rayyah Muhammad al-Rayyah, and 503 were seriously injured, including Lt Col Kamal Hakim, Maj Abdullah Umran and 1st Lieutenant al-Nur Muhammad al-Nur. Twenty-seven vehicles were destroyed, including one BM-24. Among the destroyed vehicles were one loaded with shells of howitzer 122-mm, one loaded with 106-mm mortar, two tanks, and another car loaded with various types of ammunition. [passage omitted]

The correspondent says that almost all the 25 enemy vehicles that managed to enter Al-Nasir had their tires destroyed and were being (?towed). He said that unless the commander of the reinforcements, Col Mamun Muhammad Ahmad, who narrowly escaped, has some miracles [as heard] which manufactured tires in Al-Nasir, his return to Malakal will be very difficult, and if he attempts on foot, his troops will be annihilated. The correspondent, quoting the seriously wounded enemy soldiers who later died of their wounds, said that Col Mamun and his soldiers were not only instructed to reach Al-Nasir, but to burn all the civilian settlements around Al-Nasir.

The wounded enemy soldiers, Private Joseph Longar from Gogrial and Pvt Issa Yahya Adam from Nubah Mountains, both who died later of their wounds, revealed that the majority of their dead colleagues were from southern and western Sudan and that their wounded soldiers normally are either left on the battlefield or finished off by their colleagues under orders of their commander. Meanwhile, a correspondent for Radio SPLA in the area says that the dead bodies of the enemy soldiers, which were left on the battleground by Col Mamun, were buried by the forces of Unity Campaign on humanitarian grounds.

The spokesman of the SPLA Military High Command has again warned the Khartoum government that all their plans of intensifying the war in the country are wishful and will not solve the problems of the people. We are genuine in our call for dialogue and Al-Sadiq must heed to this, concluded the spokesman. [passage omitted]

'Successful Operations' Noted

EA252030 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 25 APR 88

[Excerpts] Combined SPLA forces of the Task Force 1 and (Petrol) Task Force, under overall command of Captain Garang Mobil Deng and direct command of Captain Nyang Chuol Duor, carried out a series of

successful operations against the enemy forces in Southern Blue Nile. Seven enemy lorries were destroyed on the 16th and the 17th of April 1988 respectively. [passage omitted]

The lorries were being used by the enemy to transport food and military supplies to their forces at Qaysan garrison and return loaded with fruits to Damazin. The enemy soldiers who fled from the trucks got drowned in the River Nile. Very few escaped to Damazin by one car. [passage omitted]

In another development, a special task force under command of Captain (Joe Kuany Mayen) ambushed and annihilated an enemy force at (Dem Chat) on the 19th of April 1988. The remnants of the enemy force fled in disarray to Qaysan and (Taman) garrisons, leaving behind their casualties. Major (Muhammad Dirman Burmah) narrowly escaped to (Jamma). [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Reaction to Al-Wazir Assassination Continues

U.S. Involvement Alleged

JN261150 Paris AL-WIFAQ AL-'ARABI WA AL-DUWALI in Arabic 26 Apr 88 pp 1, 15

[Text] Informed diplomatic sources have revealed to AL-WIFAQ the true, full details of the criminal Zionist plan against Palestinian leader and martyr Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was assassinated in Tunis on 16 April.

The sources revealed U.S. collusion in the assassination and the use of a U.S. 6th Fleet ship to transport personnel of the Israeli intelligence service, Mosad, on board a helicopter, also belonging to the 6th Fleet, to the Tunisian coast. The sources said that five Mosad agents were transported from Israel to a U.S. aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean, which sailed to an area close to Sicily and remained in that area, waiting for a signal from another three Mosad agents who had entered Tunisia with forged Lebanese passports. These three agents rented three tourist minibuses and a car, which they claimed would be used for transporting foreign tourists inside Tunisia.

The three agents placed Abu Jihad's house under surveillance for 5 days, and when they were certain that he had arrived at his house on the evening of 16 [as published] April 1988, they contacted some people outside Tunisia. They sent a signal to the U.S. aircraft carrier where the five Mosad and Zionist Army agents were. A U.S. Cobra-type helicopter, belonging to the U.S. fleet, transported them to the Tunisian coast, 20 km from the martyr Abu Jihad's house. Another plane jammed the Tunisian radars in order to conceal the entry of the U.S. Cobra into Tunisian airspace and it also cut all telephone lines in the area.

Another Israeli plane, with the appearance of a civilian plane, flew several times in the international airspace adjacent to Tunisian airspace. When they landed on the coast, the Israeli terrorists went to the martyr Abu Jihad's house, which was placed under surveillance by another group. Unconfirmed reports have said that 30 people were involved in the operation. After perpetrating their crime, they returned by the rented buses to the coast where the Cobra helicopter transported them to their base on board the U.S. aircraft carrier.

Diplomatic sources have revealed that contacts were held between Tel Aviv and Washington before the assassination about the necessity of liquidating the Palestinian leader so as to end the popular uprising in the occupied territories and to liquidate the Palestine question once and for all. The sources have stressed that there was a connection between the hijacking of the Kuwaiti passenger plane, "Al-Jabiriyah", and the assassination of Abu Jihad to divert attention from the crime. The hijacking of the Kuwaiti plane has overshadowed the assassination.

The U.S. campaign against the hijackers and the request to apprehend one of them on the charge that he had hijacked an American plane, was part of the U.S. attempt to conceal its collusion with the Israeli Mosad's assassination of the Palestinian martyr Abu Jihad.

Mestiri on Ties With U.S.

JN261439 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 24 Apr 88 pp 3, 21

[Excerpt] United Nations, Tunis—[Passage omitted] Tunisian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri has stressed to AL-ITTIHAD that his country's relations with the United States will deteriorate if Washington vetoes the Tunisian draft resolution calling for condemnation of Israel over its assassination of the Palestinian martyr Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad.

He said: Our relations with the United States are good and we intend to promote them. However, we feel that the Americans are adopting policies that contradict our intentions. They seem unwilling to promote their relations with us. He made special reference to the signing of a memorandum of understanding between America and the Zionist entity.

Mestiri called on the Western countries to stop their support for Israel which, he said, has become terrorism itself and is endangering not only the Arab countries but all of Israel's allies as well.

Mestiri emphasized that the latest Zionist aggression will not affect Tunisia's support for the PLO. He warned that the conflict with the Zionist enemy will escalate unless the United States presses the Zionist entity to accept peace. He urged the Palestinians to continue the fight for independence as other peoples have, including the Tunisians.

He stressed that this act of aggression has undermined any chance for peace in the Middle East and has exposed Israel's true nature as an entity that lives on terrorism and whose every act is linked to terrorism.

He revealed that his country possesses special documented reports on the plane that supported the latest aggression against Tunisia and the assassination of Abu Jihad. But he said that Israel admitted planning the action and gave more details about it.

He expressed optimism that the Security Council would adopt a positive resolution condemning Israeli terrorism, especially since this is the second time Israel has perpetrated a direct act of aggression against Tunisia. [passage omitted]

Party Welcomes UN Resolution

LD261329 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] In Carthage this morning, the Destourian Democratic Rally Political Bureau met at the Republic Palace under its chairman, His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The participants examined the UN Security Council resolution that unambiguously condemned the flagrant aggression planned and carried out by Israel against Tunisia's sovereignty and integrity—an aggression that claimed the life of the martyr Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad, as well as a number of innocent victims.

The Political Bureau recorded with great satisfaction the unanimity of the UN Security Council in condemning the flagrant aggression against Tunisia and in appraising Tunisia's new era, as well as it wise leadership—leadership which adheres to the concept of international legitimacy as the only means for civilized dealings between states. It considers the resolution a victory for Tunisia's policy since 7 November, its president, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and for the just Palestinian cause, which Tunisia will continue to support and consolidate, despite Israel's aggressions, precisely as it supports all causes of justice and freedom.

The Political Bureau saw significance in the profound response expressed by the public for the leadership of the new era and its correct and objective conduct, a method meticulously and firmly chosen to deal with such an event. This event has only deepened, strengthened, and awakened the national feelings of Tunisia's youth and citizens to the eagerness of its firm leadership in safeguarding the independence of national decisionmaking whenever the matter is related to Tunisia's independence and integrity.

The Political Bureau would like to address its thanks and appreciation to the UN Security Council, its members, and the fraternal and friendly countries that took part in its deliberations, for their support of Tunisia. This has reaffirmed Tunisia's new era and its radiance upon the international scene, and will bolster the position, role, and credibility of the United Nations.

Resolution Termed 'Victory'

LD261816 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Following a Political Bureau meeting, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali chaired an emergency session of the Council of Ministers. Afterward, Information Minister Abdelwahab Abdallah made the following statement:

At the request of his excellency the president of the Republic, the Council of Ministers held an emergency meeting to evaluate the situation and draw the political and diplomatic lessons from the deliberations of the UN Security Council on Tunisia's complaint following the treacherous Israeli aggression against our country's sovereignty and integrity, and the assassination of the Palestinian struggler, Khalil al-Wazir.

The council examined the positions taken by various member countries whose delegates took part in the UN Security Council deliberations. It recorded with full satisfaction the stance of those countries which support and stand by our country, Tunisia, with its excellent international reputation, as well as its wise, firm, farsighted, and principled policy. Tunisia has always been eager to serve peace, support just causes, and honor the UN Charter and international norms.

His excellency the president expressed Tunisia's sympathy for the Palestinian people following the death of one the revolution's symbols, the martyr Khalil al-Wazir, as well as his sympathy for the families of those martyred with him during this treacherous operation. He reaffirmed Tunisia's position on the Palestinian cause and its firm support for the Palestinian people's struggle under the leadership of the PLO, their sole and legitimate representative, for self-determination, and for the establishment of an independent state on their land.

His excellency the president affirmed that Tunisia, which will maintain its policy of openness and moderation, stands firmly and steadfastly against any aggression against its integrity and the dignity of its people. His excellency hailed the Tunisian people's steadfastness behind its leadership, which is the best proof of its attachment to the republican regime and the orientations of November, as well as its devotion to national unity.

His excellency the president addressed a message of thanks and appreciation to the leaders of the fraternal and friendly countries that both supported Tunisia and praised its continued efforts to uphold justice and noble values. His excellency asserted that such a just resolution would also restore UN credibility, and consolidate the

trust of peace-loving countries in its ability to support justice and bolster just causes in line with the international community's eagerness for peace, security, and cooperation.

In conclusion, his excellency the president of the Republic expressed his appreciation for the efforts of all members of the Tunisian diplomatic corps working inside and outside the country.

Later today, at Carthage Palace, His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali met Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mestiri immediately after his return from New York where he had led the Tunisian delegation during the Security Council's discussions of Tunisia's complaint against Israel. Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche was also in attendance.

Mahmoud Mestiri submitted a detailed report to the president of the Republic on these discussions and the resolution adopted by the Security Council condemning Israel.

The minister stressed that his excellency the president expressed his satisfaction at this resolution, which he considered a victory for Tunisia's diplomacy and people.

Tunis Rally Held

LD261719 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpt] On the instructions of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, chairman of the Democratic Constitutional Rally, a large popular gathering was held at the Conferences Palace in the capital, under the supervision of Hedi Baccouche, general secretary of the Rally and the prime minister. Correspondent Wahid Bran reports:

[Bran] A short while ago, this massive popular gathering ended after hearing a message from the participants addressed to His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, in which they expressed their solidarity with his excellency and noted their high esteem for Tunisia's policies.

This massive popular gathering, which began at about 1545 in the capital's Conferences Palace, took place in the presence of members of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Constitutional Rally, a number of government members, senior state cadres, and a large number of party militants and citizens. [passage omitted]

Statement Issued

LD270106 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Here follows the text of the resolution issued by the huge popular rally that was held under the chairmanship of Mr Hedi Baccouche, prime minister and secretary general of the Democratic Constitutional Rally, acting on behalf of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali:

Once again, the hand of criminal Zionist perfidy reaches out to Tunisian territory and strikes the good men that this good land is proud to have as guests and who have done nothing wrong, but believe in the establishment of justice, freedom, and honor. They chose the means of struggle to regain their stolen rights under the banner of the principles of human rights and UN resolutions.

Once again, Tunisia has been subjected to a criminal aggression that was planned by the government of the Zionist entity and carried out by commandos from Israeli intelligence, who assassinated one of the symbols of the Palestinian revolution, the leader Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad. In doing this they violated the sovereignty of our country and the immunity of our people, showing complete disregard for all international conventions and charters.

In protest against this aggression, the Tunisian popular masses, through this huge rally and through their permanent loyalty to their combative political leadership and their president, the creator of 7 November, His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali:

1. Convey their sincere congratulations to the architect of 7 November for the great political victory—inspired and directed by His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali—that has been achieved by Tunisian diplomacy at the UN Security Council, which reaffirmed the light of Tunisia in the new era and its influence at international meetings.

2. Hail the serious, calm course pursued by his excellency, the brave attitude he adopted in dealing with the issue, and his personal attention to its minute details, in defense of Tunisia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

3. Thank all the peace- and justice-loving friendly and sisterly countries for having agreed with, and supported, Tunisia during its ordeal, again confirming the distinguished position occupied by our country among nations.

4. Believe in the continuation of Tunisia's struggle to preserve its national sovereignty, for which dutiful Tunisians have sacrificed, and in defending it by every effort, making any possible evil aggression more remote.

5. Voice their confidence that the flagrant aggression resorted to by the treacherous Zionist entity, with its usual barbarity, will make Tunisia more determined to offer unconditional support to the Palestinian cause, which the dutiful son of Tunisia, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, has made his personal cause and the cause of all Tunisians.

6. Urge all progressive popular forces in the world and peace-loving countries to confront Israeli state terrorism, expose its violation of the sovereignty of peoples; covenants, and international custom; and work to put an end to the suffering of the steadfast Palestinian people.

7. Believe that the Palestinian-Tunisian blood which mixed yesterday at Hammam al-Shatt and today at Sidi Bu Sa'id on course to an inevitable victory, is the most telling witness to Tunisia's commitment to the causes of justice and freedom.

8. Believe that the proud, struggling Tunisian people will only become more deeply rooted in their Arab and Islamic environment, thanks to imperialist plots and Zionist treachery, and absolutely committed to their vital causes. They believe firmly in the causes of justice and freedom, uphold them, back their men, and support their moves unconditionally.

Finally, the Tunisian people as a whole confirm anew their condemnation of Israel's exposed aggression and their denunciation of terrorist actions against the fraternal Palestinian people. They absolutely reject anything that would harm their sovereignty, trample on their dignity, or act against their sanctity. Therefore, they denounce the fact that some reactionary forces in the world have backed and colluded with Israel, the creature of U.S. imperialism, in a suspect way. Neither terrorism nor the Mosad frighten us. Tunisia will always remain the best supporter of the first cause of Arabs and Muslims; Palestine.

Long live Tunisia, free and independent forever. Long live the Democratic Constitutional Rally, defender of Tunisia, unifier of its people, and backer of its sovereignty. Long live the fraternal solidarity between the peoples of Tunisia and Palestine.

Kuwait

Explosion at Saudi Airline Office Injures One

LD271526 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1507 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, 27 Apr (KUNA)—A responsible security source at the Interior Ministry has said that at around 1620 this afternoon a time bomb exploded near the Saudi airlines offices in 'Alya' complex, Al-Hilali Street in the city of Kuwait. The explosion resulted in the slight injury of one of the security men stationed near the complex. The explosion also caused material damage to the Saudi Airways office and the fronts of other airway offices nearby.

Syria-PLO 'Rapprochement' Praised

LD251951 Kuwait KUNA in English 1308 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 25 (KUNA)—Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir Monday welcomed the fresh development in the Palestinian-Syrian relations embodied in the visit to Damascus by the PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and the positive dialogue between the PLO and Syrian officials.

In reply to questions from reporters, Shaykh Sabah said "we are deeply delighted by this rapprochement between the brothers in Syria and the PLO," adding that "this step will provide the onset for establishing fraternal, good and normal relations among brothers."

He expressed confidence that the "brothers in Syria are well aware of the situation in the Arab world and the designs being woven against the Arab nation and the dangerous challenges it is facing."

Shaykh Sabah urged Arab countries to further their integration and unity of positions and objectives and to consolidate their solidarity so as to foil the plans of their enemies.

The deputy premier and foreign minister lauded the prominent role played by Syrian Government and Syrian President Hafiz Al-Asad personally during the hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner "Al-Jabiriyah." Shaykh Sabah pointed out the appreciation voiced by his highness the amir to the role of President al-Asad which has greatly contributed in aborting the intentions and criminal designs of the terrorists.

He also lauded the stance of the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese nationalist forces which also contributed to aborting the intention of the hijackers to make Lebanon a scene of that terrorist operation.

Shaykh Sabah also expressed thanks and appreciation to the role played by the Cypriot Government and the relentless efforts it exerted to contain the incident and for the spirit of cooperation and understanding it showed.

The deputy premier and foreign minister held several contacts with the officials of those countries during the crisis of the hijacked airliner and following the release of its passengers.

Libyan Envoy Arrives With Al-Qadhdhafi Message

LD271043 Kuwait KUNA in English 0830 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 27 (KUNA)—Libyan permament representative in the Arab League 'Abd al-'Ati al-'Ubaydi arrived here Wednesday for a brief visit to deliver a message to H.H. the Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah from Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Al-'Ubaydi is expected today to meet with deputy premier and foreign minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir and other officials.

The Libyan official was received at the airport by Foreign Undersecretary Sulayman Majid al-Shahin, head of Libyan diplomatic mission in Kuwait Hassunah al-Shawish and Al-Sayed 'Abd al-Karim Abu Ghayth from Foreign Ministry's Protocol Department.

Saudi Arabia

Statement Issued on Severing Ties With Iran

NC262121 Riyadh Television Service in Arabic 2032 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: We have just received the following: The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has decided to sever diplomatic relations with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Iranian charge d'affaires received the following memorandum from the Foreign Ministry this evening:

In spite of Iran's hostile stands toward the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the deliberate misdeeds against its fundamental interest; in spite of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's observation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's behavior, which is inconsistent with the bases of relations among states characterized by respect for the principles of international law, adherence to diplomatic norms, and considerations of relations of Islamic brotherhood; in spite of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's observance of the involvement of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in actions inconsistent with the principles of good-neighborliness and mutual respect, such as its attempt to smuggle explosives into the Kingdom during the 1986 pilgrimage season, thus threatening the security of the pilgrims and the holy Islamic place; in spite of its exploitation of religious rites to stir up riots, sedition, and dissension among the sons of the single

Islamic nation; in spite of its repeated attempts to jeopardize the fundamental interests of the Kingdom; in spite of its obstruction of the freedom of navigation in the Gulf and the ships coming to and from the ports of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in addition to other acts of terrorism and sabotage; and, in spite of all this behavior, which is inconsistent with diplomatic norms and traditions, the Kingdom resorted to self-restraint and adhered to reason, something which is in line with the relations between the two neighboring Islamic countries.

The Kingdom tried, through various communication channels, to make the Iranian authorities understand the Kingdom's eagerness to normalize its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran on the basis of mutual respect stemming from the Islamic and historic ties between the two countries and out of the Kingdom's eagerness to preserve Islamic solidarity. However, this positive stand by the Kingdom did not receive any response from the Iranian side, which persisted in its hostile acts.

Foremost among such hostile acts was the attack on the embassy of the custodian of the two holy mosques in Tehran, which was subjected to a storming operation and acts of sabotage instigated by the official Iranian authorities, as well as the attack on diplomats in the embassy, which resulted in the death of one of the diplomats. Furthermore, the embassy's property was destroyed and its documents were plundered. The Iranian authorities' failure to ensure security and a suitable atmosphere for the Kingdom's Embassy employees in Tehran made it impossible for them to perform their work. These employees were subjected to ceaseless harrassament, a matter that dictated the departure of all embassy members from Tehran.

Therefore, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has decided to sever diplomatic relations with the Government of the Isamic Republic of Iran and has asked all the employees of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Riyadh and its General Consulate in Jeddah to leave the Kingdom within 1 week as of today at the latest.

King Fahd Chairs Council of Ministers Meeting

LD260220 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2330 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 25 Apr (SPA)—King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, chaired the ministerial meeting held at 2230 Monday, 25 April, at Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh.

After the session, His Excellency Information Minister 'Ali al-Sha'ir said in a statement to SPA that the king reviewed the recent developments and latest information on the events that occurred in the region in the past few days. [passage omitted]

We thank God, who has honored us and chosen us to serve the two holy mosques, who has enabled us to care for the pilgrims, and who has helped us achieve our aspirations and hopes to make our brethren and our sons, the citizens, happy and to improve their standards of living, to utilize all the available potential for their security and comfort, and to protect their rights and property within the framework of freedom that does not run counter to the precepts of shari'a nor contradict the traditions of society and its discipline. [passage omitted]

We are, therefore, strong with God and with our country's capabilities and loyal men. We are proud of the values and principles to which we are committed. We will not attach any importance to the unjust, heinous campaigns that certain quarters launch against the Kingdom every now and then. We know how to reply to them with the information we possess. But our Islamic manners dictate to us to rise above this bickering. [passage omitted]

The information minister went on to say: After reviewing the items included in the agenda, the council decided the following:

1. On the basis of the information provided by his royal highness the foreign minister, the council decided that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will sign the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

2. The council decided to approve the final accounts of the public ports corporation.

3. The council decided to approve the appointment of Hamad ibn Sulayman ibn Jibrin as amir of Hafr al-Batin at 15th rank.

The council also approved other appointments at the 14th rank.

King Receives Libyan Representative With Message

LD262230 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2209 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Riyadh, 26 Apr (SPA)—The custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, God protect him, has received a message from his excellency the Libyan leader, Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

The letter was handed to the custodian of the two holy mosques by the Libyan president's envoy, His Excellency 'Abd al-Ati al-'Ubaydi, when he received the envoy in his office this evening at the Royal Court at Al-Yamamah Palace.

The meeting was attended by His Excellency Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, minister of state and member of the Council of Ministers; and Maylud 'Uraybi, Libyan charge d'affaires to the Kingdom.

His Excellency 'Abd al-Ati al-'Ubaydi arrived in Riyadh earlier this evening and was met at the airport by His Excellency Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, minister of state and member of the Council of Ministers; and Maylud 'Uraybi, Libyan charge d'affaires to the Kingdom.

'Arafat Arrives in Baghdad After Damascus Visit

JN261814 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1755 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] this evening arrived in Baghdad from Damascus after a 2-day official visit to Syria. He was received at the airport by the chief and staff of the RCC Arab Liberation Office; the under secretary of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry; and Brother 'Azzam al-Ahmad, PLO representative to fraternal Iraq.

Message Sent to Perez de Cuellar on Shelling

JN261800 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1715 GMT 26 Apr 88

["Text" of message sent by Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on 26 April]

[Text] Your Excellency: I am honored to remind Your Excellency that Iraq decided to stop its bombing of Iranian cities as of midnight on 20 April 1988 as a manifestation of its principled course regarding the pursuit of peace thorugh giving the Iranian regime the chance to recoonsider its stand toward its aggression against Iraq, and particularly its aggressions against Iraqi cities and villages.

Despite the fact Iraq sincerely committed itself to what it announced, thereby ending its bombing of Iranian cities since 20 April, the Iranian regime, as on previous occasions, has not reciprocated the Iraqi measure. This regime has returned to its previous means, which are based on deception and attacking purely residential Iraqi centers. This regime's aggressive forces hit civilian targets in the Governorates of Basra and Al-Sulaymaniyah on 21, 23, 24, 25, and 26 April using bombs and rockets fired by tubular rocket launchers. Nine tubular rockets and eight 120-mm gun shells were fired on the Basra Governorate. Fifteen 155-mm artillery shells were fired on the Al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate. The shelling martyred one citizen and wounded seven others, including three women and one child. The shelling also demolished 1 house and damaged 19 other houses and 6 commercial stores.

While warning the Iranian regime against the consequnces of going too far in its perpetration of crimes against civilians in Iraq, at the same time, the Iraqi Government holds this regime entirely responsible for its violation of the moratorium on bombing cities and also for seeking to reignite the war of the cities. On this occasion, the Iraqi Government hopes to see the international community make the Iranian regime succumb to the logic of peace and terminate its course, which is based on the pursuit of war and aggression. I request Your Excellency distribute this message as an official document of the UN Security Council. Please accept my best regards.

[Signed] Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, the Republic of Iraq

General Command Issues Communique No 3,158

JN261714 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,158 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 26 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our troops' activities for last night and today were as follows:

1. Our helicopter gunships flew 61 combat sorties today, inflicting significant losses on the Khomeyniite aggressors in personnel, equipment, and weapons. Having flown these missions, they returned safely to base, God be praised.

2. In a courageous operation, one of our units attached to the I Army Corps northern sector killed 50 scoundrels and wounded others. Elsewhere in the same sector, three enemy personnel were killed, three positions of various of types were destroyed, and one ammunition dump was blown up.

3. One infantry position was destroyed and three enemy personnel were killed in the II Army Corps central sector. Another position was destroyed and another ammunition dump was blown up in the III Army Corps sector east of Al-Basrah.

4. Three scoundrels were killed; one hovercraft, one 106-mm gun, and two infantry positions were destroyed; and one tank was damaged in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris. Furthermore, three enemy boats were destroyed while anchored on the east bank of the Shatt al-'Arab. Also, one ammunition dump was blown up on the VII Army Corps' warfront.

5. Last night and today the criminal Iranian regime used long-range artillery to shell residential quarters in the cities of Basra and Al-Sulaymaniyah and the hamlet of Darband-i Khan in a deliberate bid to reignite the war of the cities. We reiterate what was contained in the statement by the military spokesman on Saturday, 23 April 1988, that this flagrant violation of one of the principles according to which Iraq stopped its bombing of Iranian cities cannot continue without a violent and comprehensive retaliation. The Iranian regime must be fully aware of this truth and of the abominable consequences of its acts.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 26 Apr 1988

Shomron, Shamir on 26 Apr 'Terrorist' Incident
TA270502 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0400 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Chief of Staff Dan Shomron said that lately the PLO has sent out a greater number of terrorist squads, but we manage to stop them at the border or at a distance from it through a hard battle. The chief of staff said this in Tel Aviv. Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe notes that the chief of staff said that the terrorists named the squad that was liquidated in the north the Bayta squad, and that its name is not connected to Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], as previously reported.

Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, the commander of the Southern Command, said that lessons will be drawn from this incident. He noted that the soldiers in the unit and their commander, who died in the clash, advanced and charged at the terrorists, as commanders and combatants are trained to do.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 0400 GMT on 27 April adds that in reaction to yesterday's clash with the terrorists "Prime Minister Shamir says that the northern border is protected in the best possible manner, and is for the most part not penetrable by terrorists. Shamir said the war in the north is difficult and he regrets the high price needed to protect the country's northern areas."]

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht says that on the basis of reports from Lebanon, the terrorist squad was aided by Lebanese villagers on its way to the border. These are Lebanese who belong to the communist movement and collaborate with members of Nayif Hawatimah's organization.

Rabin on Terrorism in Lebanon, IDF Unrest Costs
TA270649 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Telephone interview with Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by moderator David Grossman, political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami, and army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe in the studio—live]

[Text] [Grossman] Mr Rabin, on the day following the incident in the north in which we lost two combatants, what lessons, in your opinion, should we draw from this battle in which our force battled terrorists after being ambushed on difficult terrain and with poor visibility?

[Rabin] Allow me first to extend the condolences of the defense establishment and myself to the families of the battalion commander, Shmu'el Adiv, and scout Ramzi Wahsh. Let me also express the hope that the wounded will recover soon. As for the issue itself, one should view it in the context of the entire picture.

In over 1 month we will be marking the 3d anniversary of the completion of the IDF redeployment as decided by the current cabinet to guarantee security for the Galilee. In the course of these 3 years, no Israeli civilian has been killed as a result of terrorist acts launched from Lebanon. Thirty-four IDF soldiers have been killed in achieving this goal. The goal has been attained, but the price is painful.

Over the past 4 and 1/2 months we have witnessed a growing number of attempts by terrorists to infiltrate our border. Six terrorist squads managed to reach the border fence. Three of them belonged to 'Arafat's PLO and operated mainly in the western and central sectors. The three terrorist squads which recently tried to infiltrate our border in the eastern sector belong to the pro-Syrian terror organizations—those which enjoy freedom of action in the Al-Biqa' region as a result of Syria's control of the northern Al-Biqa' and its proximity to Syria.

Our forces are primarily deployed to fulfill the task of guaranteeing security, and they try to do so at the minimum painful price. We are witness to the fact that the more the terrorists fail to carry out their acts, the more they try to shift their infiltration attempts to difficult terrain. Yesterday's infiltration took place near Mount Hermon, a mountainous, rocky area covered with vegetation. This allows the terrorists to take cover even after they have crossed the border fence, in which case rapid action is necessary in order to prevent the murderers' squads from reaching the settlements. This sometimes entails a painful price.

[Ben-'Ami] Still, Mr Defense Minister, could you say that the northern border is impenetrable, and that the security zone indeed helps keep the northern settlements free of terrorist activity?

[Rabin] Look, I judge a policy and its implementation primarily by the results it achieves. When the present government was formed and I was appointed defense minister, there were 15,000 IDF soldiers deployed in Lebanon. The painful price we paid for our presence in Lebanon was high, and I believe that the policy determined by the cabinet in January 1985, at the recommendation of the General Staff and the Defense Ministry, obtained its goal.

Regrettably, the war in Lebanon did not liquidate terrorism from Lebanon. The broad terrorism infrastructure—made up of the refugee camps, the pro-Syrian terrorist organizations, the Hizballah, and the increased radicalization and hostility among the Shi'ite community in general—has perpetuated Lebanon's place as the land of terror against Israel, and not only Israel. Therefore, the policy which has been exercised for 3 years now has achieved its goal. During the Lebanese war we did not solve the problem of terror from Lebanon, but we have found a better way to fight it.

[Grossman] Mr Defense Minister, with your permission, let us move on to another arena of IDF activity, the uprising in the territories. First, I believe there is some clarity [as heard] about the data concerning the costs of fighting the intifadha [uprising in Arabic]. Different figures are cited. Could you possibly clarify things?

[Rabin] The data that I presented to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday with the help of IDF and defense establishment people are the correct data. If, as is our current plan, we are required to maintain our forces for the present fiscal year, namely until 31 March 1989—in other words, if we do not achieve significant calm within a shorter time—the costs involved, in addition to what has been spent since 9 December 1987, will exceed our budget forecasts and reach over 400 million shekels. In effect, we estimate we will need a supplement of more than 200 million shekels.

One should understand that the reality of the violence in the territories necessitates greater troop deployment there, as well as additional equipment and activity, and this entails additional funds. This is a security task according to the cabinet decision and the current policy. This is a security need, and a security need costs money at times.

[Ben-'Ami] Mr Minister, according to the forecasts in your possession, should we expect the uprising to continue until the date you have cited, or could we possibly see the end...?

[Rabin, interrupting] I believe that the level of violence is already on the decline. I believe that the measures we have adopted, combined with the time.... [changes thought] We are not talking here of activity against a small group of people, against a terror organization, but rather against numerous elements in the population who sympathize and collaborate with the terrorist elements. We are talking of the need to punish and detain hundreds and thousands of people. Today we are holding nearly 4,900 detainees in IDF lockup facilities. This figure does not include the thousands of terrorists jailed in prisons under the jurisdiction of the Prison Service. If, for the near future, we need to maintain at least the current level of troop deployment in the territories, and if we need to adopt economic and administrative measures not only to prevent violence but to reduce the population's level of motivation, then what we also need to achieve our goal of calm is time.

[Menashe] Mr Rabin, the Bayta report is supposed to be submitted to the cabinet and Inner Cabinet. Do the conclusions of the report, as submitted to you, substantively resemble the initial debriefing by the IDF?

[Rabin] I will not reveal any details nor my conclusions concerning the report, which has already been submitted to me and which I have already read, before it is presented to the cabinet or the Inner Cabinet.

[Menashe] It will be presented to the Inner Cabinet today, will it not?

[Rabin] I will not say what will take place in the Inner Cabinet.

Police 'Mishap' Linked to Dimona Bus Hijacking

TA270527 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0400 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] It has now been revealed that a police roadblock did not function effectively during the terrorist bus hijacking incident near Dimona last month. Yesterday, Police Commissioner David Kraus reported to the Knesset Interior and State Audit Committees on the incident but details were censored.

When news of the terrorist infiltration and the hijacking of a Renault car carrying army officers first reached police, they ordered a roadblock to be set up by a police patrol. The policemen were ordered to shoot at the tires of the car because it was not known if the terrorists had taken hostages. But when the vehicle ran the roadblock, one policeman fired but failed to hit it, while the second failed to fire due to a faulty gun. The third policeman was still busy putting up the roadblock and thus did not shoot at all. Commissioner Kraus told the Knesset committees that this was a mishap and not a case of neglect, and therefore he had decided not to press charges against the policemen. Kraus said the affair was investigated by all branches of the security forces and all came to the conclusion that the policemen had acted properly.

2 U.S. Correspondents' Press Cards Suspended

TA270504 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The press cards of two foreign correspondents, Martin Fletcher of NBC and Glen Frankel of THE WASHINGTON POST, were suspended today by Yoram Ettinger, the director of the Government Press Office. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami said Ettinger decided to suspend the two correspondents' press cards after they reported details which they said were given to them about Israel's role in the murder of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] without the permission of the military censor. The decision whether to return the press cards will be made after the two face a hearing.

Inner Cabinet Receives Bayta Inquiry Report

TA270916 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] The Inner Cabinet members today received the report on the defense establishment's inquiry into the Bayta affair. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the defense minister and IDF officers reviewed the details of the incident. Several ministers

asked for clarifications, but no debate was held today. At the request of Ministers Moda'i and Navon, the Inner Cabinet will hold a debate on the conclusions of the report.

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Territories

'Palestinian Sources' Report

TA271010 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 27 Apr 88 pp 1, 2

[Report by Joel Greenberg

[Text] Military sources yesterday reported the third consecutive day of "relative calm," with no fatal incidents in the West Bank. No incidents were reported by the IDF spokesman, and Palestinian sources said there were minor clashes in several locations, but no casualties. Along with the drop in violent incidents, the Judaea and Samaria Civilian Administration reported a more than 85 per cent turnout for work, and brisk shopping at makeshift food stands, despite the commercial strike.

Palestinian sources in several West Bank towns attributed the calm to the Ramadan fast, which is traditionally a "slow period." Energies are sapped by the day-long fast and focused on festive meals after sundown and before dawn. But security sources attributed the calm to Palestinian fatigue after five months of riots, and to tough security measures, including mass arrests, and the recent curfews and closures imposed on towns and refugee camps. The sources warned, however, that the situation was volatile, and could explode into violence at the slightest provocation.

Palestinian sources reported the following incidents:

—At Abu Dis, near Jerusalem, troops used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse youths who pelted them with rocks, burned tyres, and raised Palestinian flags and pictures of Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad).

—At Aqraba, south of Nabulus petrol bomb was thrown at a car traveling to the adjacent settlement of Ma'ale Efrayim, but there were no casualties. Community leaders were summoned to the Nabulus military government and warned that homes would be demolished in the village if petrol bomb attacks continued.

—Troops used tear gas to break up crowds of youths in Al-Shuyukh and Sa'ir, near Hebron, in clashes that broke out after soldiers ordered villagers to remove Palestinian flags. Rioters also hurled rocks at troops in Hebron.

—In Qalqilyah, rioters toppled a wall of cement-filled barrels that had been erected to block stone-throwing. In Bethlehem, troops demolished for the second time a makeshift monument erected in memory of a rioter shot and killed by soldiers in a clash earlier this month.

Three Arab bus companies were ordered closed for a week as punishment for their participation in a general strike on April 14. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 1000 GMT on 27 April adds that "The Civil Administration has suspended the licenses of six Arab bus companies operating in Judaea and Samaria."]

On Monday night, after clashes with rioters, troops entered Lubban al-Sharqiyah, south of Nabulus, and Kafr Thulth, east of Qalqilyah, to make arrests, clear rock barricades, and take down Palestinian flags.

Riots in Gaza; Tulkarm Death

TA271100 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] There were riots at the Al-Shati' and Al-Nusayrat refugee camps and at the entrance to the town of Gaza today. They were dispersed with tear gas. Aside from these incidents, there have been no serious clashes with the security forces. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that thousands of workers left Gaza for work in Israel this morning. The school system is operating normally, as is commercial life, particularly in the open markets.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 1000 GMT on 27 April reports further on the situation in the territories, saying that "The army spokesman says it's checking a report that a 15-year-old girl was shot and later died in a Nabulus hospital earlier this morning. Reporter Steve Rodan quotes Arab and hospital sources as saying that the girl was shot during a clash with soldiers last night in the village of Kafr al-Dik in the Tulkarm District. She was shot in the head and brought to Al-Ittihad Hospital, where she reportedly died at 0200 this morning."]

Seven of the 14 detained businessmen from the Damascus Gate area of the Old City have been released after agreeing to deposit 1,000 shekels for their bail and undertaking to pay another 1,000 shekels by next Friday. Last night all 14 refused to pay such a sum and remained in custody as a result. At the moment the remaining seven are expected to pay a similar sum for their release. Our correspondent 'Adi Malul reports that their trial will open tomorrow.

Acid Thrown at Arab Policemen

TA271147 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Excerpts] A 13-year-old [as heard] girl died today of wounds she sustained yesterday during a riot in Kafr al-Dik in the Tulkarm District. Military sources told our correspondent Arye Gus that an IDF force that was engaged in security activity in the village had to resort to shooting in order to extricate itself after a violent riot erupted there. The girl, 'Arij Isma'il al-Dik, who was apparently wounded in the shooting, was brought to the hospital in Nabulus last night and died of her wounds today.

In Hebron, an unknown person threw acid in the face of three Arab policemen. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that this took place near Bet Hadassah this morning. The incident involved three policemen who returned to duty on the police force after having resigned. They were transferred to a hospital in Jerusalem for treatment, and are reported to be in relatively good condition. [passage omitted]

Police have reduced their presence in the Wadi 'Ara area in the wake of the prevailing calm there. Our correspondent Yo'el Dar reports that Commander Shlomo Haron, the commander of the Northern District Police, praised the cooperation of the Arab sector leaders.

Jewish Underground Convict Freed 26 April

TA260741 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0730 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Baraq Nir, one of the Jewish underground convicts, was freed a short time ago from Tel Mond Prison after serving 4 years of his 6-year prison sentence. Baraq Nir refused to request a presidential pardon. He was convicted for his role in the Hebron Islamic College murder affair, among other things. A large reception is planned for him in Bet El, the settlement where he lives.

POST Sees Shamir Role in 'Growing Extremism'

TA260903 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Apr 88 p 10

[Editorial: "Nonchalantly to the Brink"]

[Text] Outright war-mongering, once a perfectly honourable occupation, has gone out of fashion since World War II. Sovereign states are these days supposed to settle their differences by peaceful means. All too often, however, the profession of peace is but a synonym for the pursuit of war, especially in the Middle East. Last Sunday night a long process of reconciliation, hastened by the killing of Abu Jihad, [Khalil al-Wazir] brought Yasir 'Arafat—not surprisingly, according to Yitzhaq Shamir—to Damascus, for a meeting with Hafiz al-Asad. It need not be a love-feast. But a meeting of minds between the Syrian president and the PLO chieftain, based on the concept of "armed struggle" against Israel, and on the rejection of the Shultz peace plan, should not be impossible.

It may sooner or later induce the Syrians to allow their proteges in the breakaway Palestine National Salvation Front to be reunited with the PLO. Peace will be on all their lips when they jointly set out to escalate their terrorism. To Jordan's King Husayn, terrorism is supposed to be anathema. The Hashemite monarch would not agree to form a joint peace delegation with 'Arafat unless the PLO not only endorsed Resolution 242, but also renounced terrorism. In so stipulating, Husayn was assumed to be laying down the conditions under which he would, even while acknowledging the Palestinians' rights, come forward at an international conference as the claimant to the West Bank, which Jordan had ruled between 1949 and 1967, and to Gaza, which it had not.

Earlier this month, however, Jordan's prime minister, Zayd al-Rifa'i, issued what could be read as a declaration of Jordanian incompetence to speak for the Palestinians and a renunciation of Jordan's territorial claims west of the river. A masterpiece of ambiguity, it could nevertheless also be read as another Jordanian exercise in playing both sides of the street. Or as a ploy to pressure the PLO on the one side, and Israel on the other side, into seeing the light, Amman style.

On Sunday, the day 'Arafat flew into Damascus, King Husayn, answering questions by NBC television, in effect ceded to the PLO chieftain responsibility for the territories by removing, or at least seeming to remove, the previous ambiguity. The chances for peace in the region, he said, were slipping away, and nuclear war, no less, might be in the offing due to the territorial obstreperousness of Israel's premier. But his own government, Husayn said, just could not act on behalf of the Palestinians.

Had Israel's premier not been Yitzhaq Shamir, he might retort by trying to call Husayn's bluff: by inviting the king to immediately withdraw all Jordanian interests in the territories, and by informing him that Israel would indeed try to negotiate a suitable territorial arrangement with peace-seeking Palestinians. But the premier could not in good conscience do so and stay at his party's helm.

For what Mr. Shamir expects, or pretends to expect, of King Husayn is that the king of Jordan both renounce any territorial claim in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza—"Are these his grandmother's inheritance?" the premier asked, derisively, yesterday—and at the same time to actively help solidify Israel's grip on the territories, via the autonomy plan. It is Husayn's failure to cooperate in carrying out the Likud's annexationist design that Mr. Shamir holds to be an impediment to peace and a sign of Jordan's own growing extremism. Extremism is the coin of the realm in the Arab world today, Mr. Shamir observes, not bothering to observe himself in the mirror as he nonchalantly leads the country to the brink.

Syrian-Palestinian Reconciliation Lauded

TA261517 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Apr 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "The Syrian-Palestinian Rapprochement"]

[Text] The Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation is considered a turning point in the political battle being waged by the PLO for participation in the peace process on equal footing with the other parties concerned. This achievement is also regarded as crowning the efforts exerted by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat for working out a unified political strategy. When 'Arafat

arrived in Damascus yesterday he affirmed to all observers the impossibility of closing the Syrian door to political efforts. At the same time he proved the keenness of the Palestinian side to play an active and positive role, together with all the concerned Arab states, in drawing up a single response to Shultz' plan and in preventing any attempt aimed at peddling a settlement that ignores the Palestinian right to self-determination.

The points of common understanding between Damascus and the PLO are fundamental and outweigh personal differences. These differences must be overcome due to the sensitivity of the current stage through which the Palestinian cause is passing and recent developments in the occupied Arab territories. Among the most prominent of these points is the call by Syria and the PLO for a unified Arab delegation at the international conference and the rejection of the U.S. concept for a solution which is represented in the Shultz plan. This plan aims at dividing the solution and at leading the problem into a maze of interim and final stages that would allow Israel to evade implementing a comprehensive settlement. Other points of common understanding are the insistence by Damascus and the PLO on the convocation of an international conference with plenary powers and not just a ceremonial international conference that would serve as a cover for direct negotiations, and their unanimity on the need to safeguard legitimate national Palestinian rights.

It is certain that Syrian-Palestinian rapprochement would consolidate the Soviet position in confronting Washington. It is likely that the Kremlin exerted a great effort to effect this rapprochement because it wants to show the United States that it is coordinating with a unified Arab position regarding the international conference and Shultz' plan. This is something that Washington has failed to bring about with Israel. Up to now Shultz has not succeeded in obtaining a unified Israeli position regarding his plan. Shamir is still adamant in his rejection, although there were positive signs in the positions of some Arab countries regarding this plan despite some reservations and the forwarding of some questions and observations to the U.S. secretary which he considered to be a positive indication that heralds progress.

There is no doubt that the more Arab-Palestinian solidarity expands, the easier it will be for Arab efforts to persuade the United States to carry out its responsibility honorably, divorced from any bias toward one party, so that it would be able to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace settlement that takes into consideration the viewpoints of the Arab and Israeli sides and which tries to seek a compromise between them.

Significance of 'Arafat Visit to Damascus Viewed

TA261559 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic
25 Apr 88 p 1

[Editorial: "'Arafat's Visit to Damascus and the Required Syrian Response"]

[Text] The visit by brother Yasir 'Arafat to Damascus represents a significant development in Palestinian-Syrian relations. This visit came not only to crown Palestinian-Syrian meetings held during the past days in Damascus, but also to crown the Palestinian desire to overcome all differences impeding the normalization of relations between the two sides.

Perhaps one who has followed the political activity exerted by the PLO toward Syria can discern the extent of Palestinian concern for mending the bridges of dialogue and understanding with the Syrian brothers, and removing all obstacles that might strain this historical and fateful relationship. The PLO always viewed the Palestinian-Syrian relationship, not from a tactical perspective aimed at serving a specific stage, but through a conviction based on the significance and strategy of this relationship. The conviction was that this relationship was important for boosting the Arab ranks for promoting the Palestinian cause.

It was God's will that the martyrdom of the leader "Abu Jihad" and his burial in Damascus served as the crowning of Palestinian efforts to establish bridges of rapprochement and dialogue with Syria. It opened a new page in the history of Palestinian-Syrian relations. We express our pleasure at this visit, particularly as it is taking place amid delicate and sensitive conditions through which the Palestinian cause is currently passing. We hope that the Syrian brothers will respond positively to this Palestinian initiative and will extend their hand to that of brother "Abu 'Ammar" which has always been extended to all the Arabs for the sake of serving the Arab nation and its fateful cause.

King Reiterates Stand on PLO, Peace Process

JN251017 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Apr 88 pp 1, 23

["Text" of speech by King Husayn at an Iftar fast-breaking banquet in Irbid on 24 April 1988]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Greetings. I hope that each one of you will convey my love and appreciation to all the kinfolk and dear people in this governorate, in this dear part of our Jordanian homeland. What I see reflected in the eyes of my brothers is what is in my heart and mind toward you all. It is good to gather in this blessed month and on such a beautiful evening when God has showered us with his mercy and abundant wellbeing, which he bestows on us throughout the year.

I would like to affirm to all my brothers that I am happy to meet you all after this long time when circumstances deprived me of conferring with you in events such as we used to hold throughout past years. However, the picture of this dear, beloved, and large Jordanian community to which we all belong was never absent from my mind. I hope that circumstances in the future will allow me to meet with you in all parts of our one large homeland.

I have always tried and will always continue to perform my duties under these difficult circumstances in the face of challenges and dangers that threaten the present and future of the Arab nation. I am well aware of the responsibility we all bear toward our future generations as well as our responsibility to defend the truth and homeland and the entire Arab order within the great Arab nation.

I believe that our country, through its strategic location and the efforts of its citizens who are carrying the message and flag of the great Arab revolt, is now at a stage where it can perform its duty toward the Arab nation in a satisfactory way and that it has become the center of reliability for all.

Everyone in the Arab nation knows that we have no ambitions or objectives or concealed designs, and our goal is only to fulfill our duty so that the Arab nation, with God's help, will be strong in the face of challenges and will be capable of overcoming the difficult tests in the face of the malicious big powers surrounding us.

Steadfast Arab Iraq, through its sacrifices in the 8-year old war, not only defends its land and existence but also the Arab nation. Near us on the other side are our brethren, who, after 20 years of occupation, have started this magnificent uprising which groups the young, old, women, children, and men in a heroic stand in the face of occupation and its oppressive practices.

In every place, we find the Arab citizen following the path of steadfastness, never succumbing to despair since despair will never find its way to the soul of the faithful. As we stand with all our resources and power by the side of our brethren we are performing our duty toward them and toward ourselves and future generations. We are continuously working to build our strength as God has told us in the Koran.

If we look back and remember previous years we will find that: In 1948 the Arab Army numbered 6,500 including every rank. Now the Armed Forces number 120,000 soldiers under arms. In addition, there are the reserves, the Popular Army, and the modern arms in the hands of faithful capable people to work with them in the best manner to defend the land and preserve this country's status as a shield for the Arab nation and its rights.

We have achieved great development in all aspects and venues of life...as a result of determination, understanding, and sincerity. We pray that God will continue to guide us to achieve our aims. We stand by our brethren under all circumstances.

If there is to be a political solution to the central cause of our problem—the Palestinian question—it is inevitable that this should be achieved through an international peace with the participation of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council and all parties involved in the conflict, including the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people.

Jordan will never replace the Palestinians or seek to assume the role of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Yet, Jordan is willing to go to the international conference in a joint delegation with the Palestinians if the involved parties, I mean the Palestinian side and our brethren elsewhere in the Arab World, agree.

We have stood firm with the tide of the great Arab revolt in the face of evil designs against the Arab identity of Palestine and the rights of our brethren on the Palestinian soil. This was our stand from 1948 to 1967 and until now, until the rights return to their owners, with God's help. We support our brethren with all our capabilities and resources. This is our duty and this is our fate.

As we stand by our brethren in the occupied territories and on the side of Iraq which defends the Arab order, we also stand by the side of every Arab brother who faces aggression and we in Jordan remain one family, one hand, and one heart.

Every single person in this land is a member of this family and every person, regardless of the place his ancestors came from, is an Arab of this land and has his place in this family and in this march. Every person knows that he has obligations as much as he has rights and respect, as specified in our country's Constitution. We all stand with one hand and one heart, facing any attempt to dismember and weaken us or to infringe upon our national unity.

I pray to God that we will all be up to the challenge thanks to your awareness, which has always been a source of pride and appreciation, your cooperation to achieve prosperity, and your united stand in the face of challenges.

I also pray to God to grant us success, sponsor us, and gather us all on the path of prosperity so that the true Arab flags will always remain high. I ask God to help us to perform our duty in the service of Arab accord and reconciliation. Greetings and may God bless you all.

Al-Wazir's Widow, Other Palestinians Arrive

JN261806 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Mrs Intisar al-Wazir, widow of martyr Khalil al-Wazir, and her sons arrived in Amman from Damascus via Al-Ramtha this afternoon. PNC Deputy Speaker Salim al-Za'nun and the PLO representative in Saudi Arabia, Rafiq al-Natshah, arrived with Mrs al-Wazir.

She told a PETRA-JNA correspondent that the aim of her visit to Jordan is to thank His Majesty King Husayn, the Jordanian Government and people, and the Palestinian people for their concern and preparation to hold the funeral of the martyr in Jordan. She added: Although we were not able to do this, I repeat my thanks and appreciation.

She said she will meet with the kinfolk and brothers in Jordan. She saluted the kinfolk in the occupied Arab territories for their struggle. She also saluted the martyrs of the heroic uprising.

She was received by the Al-Ramtha border director; 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Yahya, the PLO representative in Amman; and a number of local officials.

King, Queen Offer Condolences

JN262030 Amman Television Service in English 1900 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Excerpt] His majesty the king and Her Majesty Queen Nur this evening visited the widow of the late Palestinian military leader Khalil al-Wazir and offered her their condolences on the passing of her assassinated husband.

Mrs al-Wazir thanked their majesties for their condolences wishing them all health and prosperity. [passage omitted]

Information Minister on Syrian-PLO Meetings

JN241351 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Randa Habib report from Amman]

[Text] Jordan today welcomed the signs of Syrian-Palestinian rapprochement in light of the meetings now taking place in Damascus between Syrian and Palestinian leaders to normalize political relations.

In a statement to our radio, Jordanian Information Minister Hani al-Khasawinah said: We in Jordan pursue a pan-Arab policy. The basis of that policy is the advocation and welcoming of any meeting between two Arab sides and the elimination of any differences between them. He added: Such a line is part of Jordan's known policy which Amman calls the policy of reconciliation and accord.

Al-Khasawinah added: We will be very happy to see any Syrian-Palestinian meeting take place. He continued: We believe that in the face of the threats facing the Arab nation, meetings among Arab sides provide the main support for confronting challenges and threats.

It was learned from an informed source in Amman today that Intisar al-Wazir, wife of the martyr Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian forces, who was assassinated in a Tunis suburb last Saturday, is expected to visit Jordan in the next few days. It will be the first visit by Intisar al-Wasir since she and her husband left Amman in July 1986.

Government Warned of 'Sabotage Attempts'

JN261233 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 24 Apr 88 pp 1, 21

[By 'Atif Wadah]

[Text] Rabat—AL-ITTIHAD has learned that a number of Arab and international security apparatuses have informed Jordan of terrorist plans and sabotage attempts aimed to create security confusion and apply pressure on Jordan to accept a political settlement to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Diplomatic sources told AL-ITTIHAD that the scheme also aims to decrease the pressure of the mammoth popular uprising on the Zionist entity and to divert attention to new events in the Jordanian arena. The sources pointed out that the two recent explosions that occurred in the center of Amman are part of this scheme, especially since the second explosion in the Amman town hall building occured hours after the assasination in Tunis of martyr Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad.

U.S.-Israel Memo 'Slap in the Face' for Arabs

JN261012 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Apr 88 p 4

[Editorial: "Gifts, Guarantees"]

[Text] The sweeping American-Israeli "memorandum of agreement" on cooperation that was signed last week was described as a "great U.S. gift" to Israel on the eve of the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Zionist state.

And so it may be, but it indeed is an open slap in the face of the Arab World in that the memorandum, which binds successive' American administrations into towing the heavily pro-Israeli policy of the Reagan White House,

cannot be seen as anything but a reward for Israeli extremists led by its Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir who has done nothing but undermine prospects for a just and comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The "great American gift" to Israel also coincides with Washington's declared efforts to bring in an international context to Middle East peace negotiations through accepting the idea of an international conference under U.N. auspices, albeit a heavily watered-down version of the Arab call for such a forum.

By the same token, Washington has made its stand very clear by openly indicating its unambiguous stand by the side of one of the protagonists— Israel—in the overall equation.

How does that compare with the American contention that the Soviet Union has not been doing anything "creative" to warrant a role in Middle East peace negotiations? Can the wide-ranging memorandum of agreement which establishes without the slightest trace of doubt Israel's status as the most important strategic ally of the U.S. in the Middle East be seen as "creative"?

It is precisely because of this lop-sided American stand that the Arabs are insisting on a full-fledged international conference which will not be just a ceremonial umbrella for peace talks. If anything, the Arab insistence should indeed be strengthened by the open American declaration through its latest gift to Israel since there is little doubt that the roles appear to be reversed now; it will be the U.S. that will try to impose Israeli solutions on the Arabs rather than the Soviets and Chinese trying the same thing with Israel as Shamir and company allege.

SAWT AL-SHA'B Welcomes Syrian-PLO Meeting

JN261310 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 26 Apr 88 pp 1, 19

[Editorial: "We Welcome the Syrian-Palestinian Meeting"]

[Text] Jordan, which welcomes the Syrian-Palestinian meeting, proceeds from its conviction that closing and activating Arab ranks is the means to awaken the nation to defend its order and its countries against the challenges facing it.

These challenges were created by external aggression represented by the Israeli occupation of the occupied Arab territories and the Iranian aggression in its war against Iraq and other Arab states in the Gulf region—along with its refusal to end the war—and in turning the Gulf into a region of conflict and tension.

This encroaches on Arab interests and results in the continued presence of foreign fleets and troops. Iran is responsible for this foreign presence through its continuous aggression against international shipping.

The Palestinian people's mammoth uprising against the Israeli occupation and its terrorist practices is still raging with the goal of allowing the Palestinian people to achieve self-determination through a just, durable, and comprehensive settlement.

This great uprising is worthy of all Arab material and moral support. It is also worthy of being preserved and provided with an Arab political move to curb any attempt to bypass or abort it.

From this premise, Jordan has declared its firm and clear stand toward political ideas held in the region, particularly the U.S. initiative via the principles it delivered to the U.S. secretary.

In this context, the Jordanian stand was reiterated by His Majesty King Husayn in his speech in the Irbid Governorate on 24 April. The king said: If the solution is going to be a political solution of the most important and central issue, the Palestine question, then this must take place through the international conference attended and supervised by the five permenant member states of UN Security Council and with the participation of all parties to the conflict.

The PLO must represent the Palestinian people in this conference. Jordan will not replace the Palestinians, who have the right to their soil, nor will it replace the PLO, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The Amman summit solidified many bases and concepts of joint Arab action and forged a formula to create an Arab stand based on coordination to deal with any settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The summit also achieved results that opened wide doors for the inter-Arab dialogue. It also created an Arab atmosphere that helped to a large extent to prompt the masses of the Palestinian people to reject occupation policies and to express their rejection through the heroic uprising.

The spirit of the Amman summit, which has spread in our nation and ended the state of collapse and disagreement resulting from the absence of a coordinated, common Arab action, has undoubtedly enabled strong Iraq to see itself in its Arab battle as fighting in defense of the nation, its order, and the future of its generations, which are under threat of aggression.

If the Iraqi victories and the heroism of the Palestinian uprising are distinguished factors of awakening in the Arab ranks, then the continuation, reactivation, and expansion of the inter-Arab dialogue will enable the Arab leaders' comprehensive political move to gain dimension and significance, which will greatly help Arab objectives.

From this, the Jordanian perception drawn by His Majesty King Husayn is constant and firm and expresses itself through continuous practices. This perception is based on a pan-Arab policy.

The foundation of this policy is that Jordan advocates any meeting between two Arab sides and the elimination of differences between them. This is a part of the reconciliation and accord policy that was consecrated at the Amman summit. The summit defended this policy and considered it the road that will lead to the unity of Arab ranks and confrontation of the dangers and challenges facing our nation.

3 'Enemy Soldiers' Killed in 'Heroic Operation'

NC261220 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] In less than 24 hours after destroying a radar post, heroes of the National Resistance Front carried out a daring and heroic operation in Al-'Urqub. According to preliminary reports, the operation resulted in the deaths of three enemy soldiers, including an officer.

The attackers penetrated the forward lines of the occupation and militia forces along the Kafr Shuba axis in upper Al-'Urqub in the Mount Hermon area. Zionist military authorities banned international news agencies from reporting the deaths of their troops.

Security sources in the occupation forces in Marj 'Uyun have said that the occupation forces and the militia opened artillery fire at the town of Kafr Shuba and conducted a large-scale search of the outskirts of the town. The sources claimed that three of the attackers were killed in the assault.

Israeli Aircraft Search Area

NC261218 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The National Resistance Front released a statement today, emphasizing its responsibility for attacks on Israeli positions near the village of Kafr Shuba early this morning.

The statement added that Israeli helicopters dropped flares for 4 hours while Israeli fighter planes flew over the area and carried out a wide-scale search operation.

Israel's Lubrani Denies Plans to Withdraw

NC261720 Marj 'Uyun Lebanon Voice of Hope in Arabic 1600 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] General Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanese Army [SLA], said today's visit to Jazzin by Uri Lubrani, coordinator of Israeli activities in Lebanon, is a message to friend and foe alike. He declared:

[Begin recording] This is the first visit to Jazzin by an Israeli official as high-ranking as Lubrani since the withdrawal of the IDF. The visit is a token of friendship and an overture to any Lebanese group that wants to extend its hand to Israel.

I see this visit as significant; a message to friend and foe alike. Everyone can interpret it in his own way. Our friends can draw their own conclusions, and so can our enemies. [applause] [end recording]

These remarks were made during a tour of Jazzin by Lahd; Lubrani; General (David Agmon), head of Israel's Liaison Unit for South Lebanon; and other senior Lebanese and Israeli officers.

They inspected military positions in the area and then met with Jazzin notables in the Sayyidat Mashmushi monastery. Lubrani made a speech saying that Israel had offered peace to Lebanon in the past and still offers it to all those who want it.

Lubrani voiced the hope that an atmosphere of trust, unity, and cordiality will prevail among all sects in Lebanon, as it does in the SLA-controlled South.

Lubrani was asked about the possibility of the SLA withdrawing from the Jazzin area. He replied: If there were any plans to withdraw from Jazzin, I would not be here today. Lubrani expressed his support for all of General Lahd's positions regarding Jazzin.

Iran's Jannati, Birri Hold 'Successful' Talks

LD261147 Tehran IRNA in English 0706 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Beirut, April 26, IRNA—Head of Lebanon's Amal Movement Nabih Birri met with Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati at the Iranian Embassy here Monday afternoon.

The meeting was within the framework of Iran's efforts to end hostilities among Muslim groups in Lebanon.

Latest developments in the region were discussed in the meeting also attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam and the Iranian Ambassador to Beirut Ahmad Dastmalchian.

Ayatollah Jannati, member of the Council of Guardians and head of the Islamic Propagation Organization, stressed the need for ending disputes which he said hinder the anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist struggles.

According to informed sources these efforts have been successful and meetings and talks of this kind will continue until all problems are removed.

Syria Said To Prevent French Hostages' Release

NC261758 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1700 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The AKHBAR AL-YAWM news agency [as heard] has cited diplomatic sources as attributing the failure to secure the release of the French hostages on the eve of the first round of the French presidential elections to the apparent dispute between the Amal Movement and Hizballah and the covert differences between Syria and Iran.

According to the same sources, Syria had set conditions for the release of the hostages, demanding that the step be taken under its sponsorship and that the three French hostages be freed in Damascus instead of Beirut.

As a result, the Syrian forces stationed at Beirut Airport terminated the operation at the final stage after all indications had pointed to a definite and imminent release of the hostages.

A happy ending was prevented, according to the same sources, because of Syria's continuing insistence that the release should take place under its sponsorship. Syria's insistence in this regard was a result of its intention to exploit the release politically, especially in view of the current critical circumstances through which the region is passing.

Meanwhile, the sources predicted that the Amal-Hizballah conflict will continue in the southern suburb.

Al-Husayni Rejects 'Armed Palestinian Presence'

NC270657 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni has said that every Arab rapprochement benefits Lebanon because Arab solidarity is in our interest. However, he emphasized that an armed Palestinian presence is rejected, noting that this matter has been resolved by the cancellation of the Cairo agreement and is not subject to further discussion.

He stressed commitment to the Palestinian cause and to supporting it, as well as to the safeguarding of Palestinian civilians in Lebanon. He said he is opposed to Palestinian or Lebanese having their own security forces, noting that the state alone commands sovereignty and authority over the land. He declared the land should be liberated and UN resolutions implemented.

Blast Kills 1, Injures 7 in West Beirut

NC261353 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1345 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] One person was killed and seven others were wounded when an explosive charge went off under a Volkswagen car parked in front of Al-Zayn shop on Al-Awza'i Street in Al-Barbir at around 1430 today.

Further on Rapprochement With Palestinians

Khaddam-Fatah Meeting

JN261645 Kuwait AL-SIYASAH in Arabic
24 Apr 88 pp 1, 20

[Shakiri al-Jawhari report from Damascus]

[Text] The march of Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation has achieved another step forward. On 22 April at midnight, it was decided to hold an unexpected meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and members of the Fatah Central Committee who participated in the funeral of martyr leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

This was disclosed to AL-SIYASAH by Fatah leader, who took part in a meeting with Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam attended by members of the Fatah Central Committee on the nigght of 22 April lasting 4 hours and 15 minutes, from 2000 until 0015.

At the end of the meeting, Khaddam said he would convey to President al-Asad a positive picture of what took place during the meeting. He also informed the Palestinian delegation that he would arrange for the delegation to meet with the Syrian president today, Sunday, after he returns from Latakia.

The Palestinian official disclosed to AL-SIYASAH the details of the lengthy meeting with Khaddam as follows:

At the beginning of the meeting, Khaddam spoke about the martyrdom of leader Abu Jihad. He said: We bow in respect to this man, whose words express his deeds. The uprising in the occupied territory is linked with his name in a prominent way.

Khaddam added: We never noticed in Abu Jihad's statements any relinquishment of principles. He never supported the Camp David accords; he never praised Egypt's policies; and he never accepted relinquishing one inch of Palestinian territory.

Khaddam also said: We never heard that he encouraged contacts with Zionist forces. The man devoted his time to action in the occupied territory. Recently, he devoted his time to the uprising.

The talk about Abu Jihad, his struggle, and martyrdom lasted for 1 hour. The conferees then discussed the seven points, which Syria sent to the Palestinian leadership through Palestinian businessman Hasib al-Sabbagh.

They then moved to the issue of the relationship between the PLO and Egypt. Here, the Syrian vice president talked about Egypt's adherence to the Camp David accords.

He said that the relationship with Egypt will not help the PLO regain the Palestinian people's rights. Khaddam also dealt with the meetings that parties to the PLO held with Zionist forces. He said that the characteristics and results of these meetings are negative.

The Syrian vice president also criticized some contradictory statements made by some Palestinian officials vis-a-vis the issue of recognizing UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 within the other UN resolutions.

He said Syria believes that the Palestinian stand on this matter should be more solid. He added that he also hates what is being said about mutual recognition between the PLO and Israel and about establishing a Palestinian state even in Jericho, which came in a statement by a PLO chairman many years ago.

After Khaddam had concluded his remarks, Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], Abu Mahir [Muhammad Ghunaym], Abu al-Hawl [Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid], Abu al-Adib [Salim Za'nun], and Hani al-Hasan, Fatah Central Committee members who participated in the meetings, then spoke.

They concentrated on the fact that the Palestinian uprising has created new developments. They said that there is now an identity among the Palestinian stand, the Syrian stand, and the uprisings' statements with regard to the rejection of the U.S. initiatives and the need for an Arab stand to embrace the uprising, which is subject to a challenge from the United States and Yitzhaq Shamir.

The Fatah leaders said they agree on the importance of the points presented by the Syrian stand, but these points need time and dialogue to arrive at a common concept.

They added that if these points are important, then there are more important points that should have priority. The more important points are the uprising, the unity of the Palestinian stand, the emergence of an Arab stand to embrace the uprising, and the confrontation of the suspect U.S. initiative.

At this point, Khaddam told the Fatah Central Committee members that he would convey to President al-Asad and to the Syrian leadership what took place in this meeting in a positive way.

He told them that their meeting with Al-Asad is possible on Sunday. The Palestinian delegation thanked Khaddam saying: When it is time to discuss these issues in details, Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] will lead us in this discussion. The final touches to the agreement should be put in the presence of Abu 'Ammar. The Syrian vice president welcomed this.

DFLP Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah earlier made a statement in which he affirmed the existence of a deterioration in political relations between the PLO and Egypt.

He said that Palestinian politics are now clashing with Egyptian politics. Hawatimah said that this does not mean there is calculated violation of the PNC resolution represented by holding contacts every now and then between PLO Executive Committee members and Egypt. These contacts are a departure from the rule that we drafted in the unifying PNC session in Algeria.

For his part, Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman said in a press conference: Our granting permission for the Palestinian faction leaders to come to Damascus reiterated our eagerness to see a unified Palestinian resistance confront the Israeli enemy as a united force, particularly at this stage.

On the two meetings held between the Fatah leaders and both Al-Shar' and Khaddam, he said: We are very eager to give the brothers within the PLO the chance to reconsider previously adopted stands and to reunify Palestinian ranks according to the political line proposed by Syria—the line to which Syria still adheres and that also represents a genuine expression of sincere efforts exerted to help realize the aspirations of the Palestinian people. This sense of the genuineness of our efforts was also conveyed by the Palestinian brothers through their positive proposals.

Salman added: The assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, the homeland's martyr, prompted the Palestinian brothers to propose these ideas. We hope that we will attain with them the unity of Palestinian ranks.

The Syrian minister also said that previous contacts were held between Syrian and PLO officials. He went on to say: The political line pursued and proposed by Syria is nothing new to the Palestinian brothers, especially when we take into account the fact that the Syrian people are maintaining military preparedness and are mobilizing all their resources for the sake of supporting the Palestinian cause and confronting Israeli expansionism. Syria's stand toward the Israeli aggression is very clear and the responsibility of confronting this enemy does not only rest on the shoulders of the PLO. The Arabs must also play their role in this confrontation.

Minister Salman said: I want to reiterate that all we require of our comrades in the PLO is to confront the enemy. We are not an obstacle standing in the way. We do not have any new demands for the PLO to meet.

The Syrian minister added: Our stand toward the Palestine question is well known. We delineated this stand during Shultz' recent tour. However, we have taken stands toward those who concluded partial solutions, which culminated in the signing of the Camp David accords. We object to the idea of meetings with the parties to the Camp David accords. The only thing we want the Palestinian brothers to do is to take clear stands.

In reply to a question on whether the PLO's relations with Egypt constitute a problem in the face of normalizing relations with Syria, the minister said: We reject the Camp David accords and do not approve of them. However, this does not mean that we are not working to solidify unified stands in our confrontation with Israel, especially at this particular time when the PLO leaders are in Damascus.

He added: The continuation of the uprising will render the brothers within the resistance movement more realistic and closer to Syria, the country that is adopting a clear stand. Peace in the region cannot be attained unless the root elements of the Palestine question are considered. The brothers within the PLO used to entertain the hope that maintaining a relationship with Egypt would help them attain their rights. However, this premise has currently been proved wrong according to the majority of these brothers.

In reply to a question of what prevented Yasir 'Arafat from coming to Damascus to participate in the funeral of martyred leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], the Syrian information minister said:

When Syria extended the invitation, it was addressed to all PLO leaders, including 'Arafat. However, 'Arafat's visit to Libya prevented him from participating in the funeral ceremony.

In reply to a question on Lebanon, Salman said: Syria has taken it upon itself to restore security and stability to this Arab state. He condemned the acts of kidnapping and terrorism being perpetrated by illegal armed groups in Lebanon.

Within this context, he defended the legitimacy of the presence of armed Palestinian factions in southern Lebanon to resist the Zionist enemy. He added: Interference in Lebanon's internal affairs was not our mission.

He asserted that there is currently a genuine discipline being demonstrated by the Palestinian factions. Hence, we cannot consider them illegal organizations.

Meanwhile, he regarded the facades behind which Hizballah operates, like Islamic Jihad and other organizations, as illusory pockets left by Israel.

On the Abu Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] organization, the Syrian minister said: The task of this organization is confronting Israel. However, if this organization reneges on its objectives and carries out illegal acts, our stand toward it will be the stand usually taken against those who seek to undermine peace and order.

He declined to answer a question on the presence of Iranian guards in Lebanon.

Damascus Meetings 'Useful'

JN261904 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1712 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Louis Faris report from Damascus]

[Text] Yasir 'Arafat left Damascus today accompanied by Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] following a meeting with Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam in the presence of the Fatah Central Committee members.

Later, 'Arafat made a statement on the results of his Damascus meetings, which he described as useful and warm on Palestinian and Arab levels.

Four members of Fatah Central Committee remained in Damascus. They are: Faruq Qaddumi, Hani al-Hasan, Hayil 'Abd al-Hamid, and Abu Mahir Ghunaym. They will continue contacts with the Syrian side as agreed upon to make arrangements and set the bases regulating relations between Fatah and Syria and to agree on the details of joint Syrian-Palestinian action.

Rafiq al-Natshah, member of Fatah Central Committee, told us that all doors have been opened before the Palestinian revolution and most outstanding problems have been resolved. The remainder are under discussion.

He added: I can affirm that a very positive future awaits Syrian-Palestinian relations and that many positive things will be acheived. He also said that the Fatah delegation in Damascus will continue contacts to achieve Palestinian national unity with the other factions.

The spokesman of the PNSF, 'Abd al-Hadi al-Nashshash, has stated that a meeting was held this evening between Khaddam and the PNSF leadership. The spokesman, Fadl Shururu [as heard], added that the meeting which was held in the presence of Faruq al-Shar', Syrian foreign minister; and Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, included Khalid al-Fahum, 'Abd al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar, Ahmad Jibril, 'Isam al-Qadi, Muhammad Khalifah, Colonel Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muraghah], Colonel Abu Khalid al-'Amlah, Fadl Shururu, and Samir Qandil. The conferees reviewed Palestinian and Arab developments. He added that viewpoints were identical.

Joint Stand Expected

JN270811 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 27 Apr 88 pp 1, 5

[By Lamis K. Andoni in Damascus]

[Text] Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasir 'Arafat left Damascus Tuesday after agreeing with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on the necessity to formulate a joint Palestinian-Syrian position to support the Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza and to counter the latest American peace plan for the Middle East.

Prior to his departure 'Arafat described his three-and-a half-hour meeting with Al-Asad as "constructive, useful and warm." He said the results of the talks would have serious effects on the Arab World in general.

During his three-day visit, the first since he was expelled from Damascus in 1983, 'Arafat also held a meeting Tuesday with Syrian Vice-President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam.

No official statement was issued but Palestinian officials said that the talks "paved the way for a complete normalisation of Syrian-Palestinian relations." The officials described the meetings as frank and warm.

"The meeting between 'Arafat and Al-Asad was extremely emotional and warm," a Fatah official said.

Other officials said that for the first half an hour both leaders discussed the assassination of PLO deputy military commander Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad) in Tunis last week. Abu Jihad was buried in Damascus last Wednesday.

The officials said that 'Arafat and Al-Asad did not discuss their past differences which cost thousands of Palestinian lives in battles between the Syrian backed Amal militia and Palestinian fighters in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

But the officials said the Syrian government had affirmed to the PLO chairman that there would be no return to the "war of the camps" in Lebanon.

The officials said that the main focus of the talks had been the Palestinian uprising and the peace proposals presented by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. "We both agreed that the American moves were aimed at suffocating the uprising," said a Fatah official.

Both sides reviewed the American stand and moves since 1978 and concluded that there was no substantial change in the Amercian position, the official said.

The official said the two sides had not formulated a joint strategy yet but had agreed on the basis of their positions on a just and durable solution to the Palestinian problem.

The Arabs are seeking a United Nations sponsored international Middle East peace conference with complete powers on the basis of the recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

The Palestinian officials said the PLO was willing to accept the Syrian idea of a joint Arab negotiating team to the suggested conference provided that the PLO will be represented on equal footing with all other parties.

Well-informed sources told the JORDAN TIMES that these points would form the main elements of a joint Syrian-Palestinian stand during an emergency Arab summit expected to convene in Algiers in the beginning of June.

PLO political department head Faruq Qaddumi confirmed reports that the Arab summit could be preceeded by a mini-summit to be held in Algiers or Tripoli in May attended by Al-Asad, 'Arafat, Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid and Libya's Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

The last two leaders played a major role in bringing about the long-awaited Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation. Meanwhile Khaddam was expected to meet a Fatah delegation again Tuesday night to continue discussing unresolved issues.

According to Palestinian sources, Syria and Fatah still have to reach an agreement on relations with Egypt and the PLO's contacts with left-wing Israeli groups and to work out more detailed arrangements over the PLO's military presence in Lebanon.

The Fatah officials and Khaddam were also expected to discuss the possibility of reopening some PLO offices and institutions in Damascus. But, according to Qaddumi, the present arrangement whereby the PLO maintains its headquarters in Tunis and offices in other Arab countries is unlikely to change in the immediate future. Palestinian sources said Fatah officials were also expected to raise the issue of 2,000 Palestinian political detainees in Syria.

Syria still maintains its reservations over the PLO's contacts with Egypt but is not demanding that the PLO sever its relations with Cairo, the sources said.

"We both agree on the importance of returning Egypt to the Arab fold and oppose the Israeli-Egyptian peace accord," a Fatah official said.

But the main difference between the Fatah leadership and Syria is on policies that should be pursued to achieve these goals. Syria insists that all contacts should be severed with Cairo unless Egypt abandons Camp David, while Fatah, or at least some of its leaders argue that the Egyptian people should not be ostracised.

"I think that Syria and the PLO, and for that matter all Arabs, should find a formula which reconciles between the goals of abrogating Camp David without isolating the Egyptian people," the Fatah official said.

PLO officials reiterated that Syria agreed that Damascus did not have any veto over relations between the PLO and Arab countries provided that the basis of such relations are compatible with the common national goals and Arab consensus.

"In fact, we believe that the Syrian-Palestinian reconciliation has opened the door for strengthening relations with Jordan," Qaddumi said.

The Palestinian factions are also engaged in moves to resume a dialogue between Fatah and three pro-Syrian groups which boycotted the last session of the Palestine National Council (PNC), held in Algiers in April 1987.

According to Palestinian sources, leader of the Popular Struggle Front (PSF) Samir Ghawshah met with 'Arafat Monday night along with a number of Fatah rebels. The sources said that 'Arafat gave the Fatah rebels a warm reception.

Monday's Al-Asad-'Arafat meeting was welcomed by left-wing PLO factions, especially the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Communist Party.

"A reconciliation between Fatah and Syria is the key, and if that is achieved there will be no problems left," DFLP leader Nayif Hawatimah said.

In Cairo, Egypt said Tuesday it hoped the 'Arafat-Al-Asad meeting would help heal Arab rifts.

"Egypt is working for a unified Arab front," Tahir al-Farnawani, head of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, told reporters. "And on this basis, it welcomes the Palestinian-Syrian meeting if it will lead to coordination between them, regain Palestinian rights and reinforce their uprising," he added.

Libya's Colonel al-Kharrubi Leaves Damascus

JN271014 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0915 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, member of the Great Al-Fatih Revolution Command Council in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, returned to Tripoli in the early hours of the morning following a 3-day visit to Damascus.

Al-Kharrubi left Damascus last night and was seen off by Interior Minister Muhammad Harbah, a number of Interior Ministry officials, and the Libyan charge d'affaires in Damascus.

Israeli 'Failure' To Quell Uprising Viewed

JN221346 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The most prominent fact affirmed by the tumultuous popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories is that this uprising has not only remained steadfast in the face of the ugliest brutal and terrorist Zionist practices but it has also placed the Zionist entity in a dilemma.

Every day, this dilemma becomes sharper with the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails at the enemy forces and military vehicles and the raising of the Palestinian flag over all villages, cities, camps, and streets in the occupied homeland.

The statements made daily by the enemy leaders on their readiness to discuss the future of the territories after the uprising stops constitute categorical evidence of their admission of their failure to quell this uprising. Our kinfolk in the occupied homeland offer martyrs and make big sacrifices in this uprising in order to remove the yoke of the criminal Zionist occupation.

Terrorist Shamir now admits the existence of a Palestinian issue. The points that the leaders of Zionist terrorism used to reject arrogantly, blatantly, and hawkishly Shamir is now in fact forced to admit.

Those leaders even asked with disdain, as Golda Me'ir once said: Where are the Palestinian people? Before 8 December, the day when the uprising began, terrorist Shamir boasted that the occupied Arab territory was part of Greater Israel and that he was not ready to discuss the existence of a Palestinian problem.

The admission made by Shamir and the other terrorists of the Zionist entity will not be the last recognition of this or that right of the Palestinian people.

They will be forced to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable, national rights sooner or later as France at last admitted that Algeria was not a French territory, as Britain was forced to evacuate Aden, and as the United States was forced to withdraw from Indochina.

The racist Zionist entity will have no better chance than the regime of Ian Smith. Terrorism and the bloody, brutal repression in racist Rhodesia did not save Smith's regime from collapse, fall, or from Zimbabwe's liberation.

The world today is aware that the Zionist entity is practicing the ugliest individual and organized terrorism. The international condemnations of the brutal crimes practiced by Israel in the occupied Arab territory are escalating.

The entire world, except the United States, is making a comprehensive call for convening a UN-sponsored international peace conference in the region—a conference that enjoys full powers to implement UN resolutions calling for ending the Israeli occupation of all occupied Arab territory and reiterating the Palestinian people's inalienable, national rights to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

This affirms that the world has realized the escalating dangers resulting from the continuation of the aggressive, expansionist Israeli policy and its arrogance exposed by the mammoth popular uprising in the occupied territory.

This uprising has also disclosed the terrorist, racist essence of the Israeli policy and proved that despite its brutality, the occupation cannot break the will of a people who have decided through their sacrifices and struggle to liberate themselves and their territory from the Zionist invaders.

Before too long, Shamir and the other terrorist enemy leaders will find out that they are forced to recognize the Arab Palestinian people's inalienable, national rights.

Afghanistan

'Powerful Car Bomb' Explodes in Kabul 27 Apr

BK2704101688 Hong Kong AFP in English 1008 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 27 (AFP) — A powerful car bomb exploded in a busy Kabul district Wednesday [27 April], witnesses said, a day after the Soviet-backed Afghan Government celebrated 10 years in power.

The bomb exploded on the periphery of the city's commercial district, destroying several vehicles and shattering windows of buildings within 200 metres (yards).

Officials gave no details on casualties, but witnesses reported signs of blood in the area. At least two women were injured by shrapnel.

Report on Najibullah Anniversary Speech

LD271018 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0503 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 26, BAKHTAR—Ten years of the April Revolution were the years of seeking ways to remove socio-economic backwardness as well as the years of peaceful and armed struggle for democracy, said Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan, in his speech delivered at a function held here on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of April Revolution on Monday.

The revolution in the past ten years, President Najibullah added, experienced bitter lessons and scored successes. The April Revolution is a law-governed result of socio-political processes inside Afghanistan. One can clearly observe that the development of world civilisation as well as liberation movement have provided the grounds for the victory of the April Revolution.

The liberation, revolutionary and reformist ideas in Russia, Turkey, Iran, India, Japan, China and other countries subjugated the hearts of patriotic Afghans.

The revolution got Afghanistan out of the scope of imperialistic influence and attained its independence in the spheres of international policy. However, the international enemies of revolution and the extremist reaction did not compromise because of losing their positions in the "heart of Asia." They, at once, imposed an undeclared war on the people of Afghanistan and converted Afghanistan to a lethal point of international tension which is dangerous to world peace and security.

Economically, the war inflicted losses to an amount of sixty billion afghanis. It left behind hundreds of thousands of martyred, injured, crippled, widows, orphans and millions of refugees. This is the black picture of the rigorous imposed war in the country, Najibullah recalled.

Possibly, the only cause for the most difficulties faced the April Revolution was inherent in the intervention of reaction and the extremists of the region into the internal affairs of Afghanistan. They did not allow the people of Afghanistan to occupy their worthwhile position alongside the other freedom-loving people of the world.

Notwithstanding the difficulties of the PDPA and the government of the Republic in rigorous war conditions, considerable successes were scored in the spheres of politics, economic, social and culture.

The Afghan revolutionary democracy laid the foundation of a state reflecting the democratic efforts of all the strata and the social groups of the people. Right now, the state sovereignty has stabilized in all cities and in more than half of the villages.

Local organs of state power and administration, said President Najibullah, have been established in the capitals of provinces, in 295, rpt 295 districts and subdistricts and in 9,800 rpt, 9,800 villages through democratic elections. The successful conclusion of elections to the National Assembly was another manifestation of deepening the process of democratising the political system of the Republic.

The present Armed Forces of Afghanistan have gathered around them the best persons of the society. Sixty percent of the PDPA members are included in the Armed Forces of the Republic.

The economic front is as an important front in the people's struggle for consolidating revolutionary gains and achieving social progress. In spite of damage inflicted on the Afghan economy due to undeclared war, the party and government were able to ensure the country's economic and social growth. The gross national product in the past year was increased eleven per cent comparing with 1978. National income increased by ten per cent and the foreign trade turnover increased one and half times, the president said.

Touching upon the course of foreign policy, he said that the principle of non-alignment, good relations with all countries, defending peace and security in the region and in the Asian Continent form the basis of foreign policy of the Republic of Afghanistan. Despite destabilising actions by the hostile states the Republic [word indistinct] diplomatic relations with 82 countries of the world, the president said.

Dealing with national reconciliation policy the president said, "this policy has not emerged in offices and sessions' halls, but in the fields, avenues, villages and tents. Revolutionary teachings about political conciliation and compromises and the experience of fraternal revolutionary parties have been placed in the foundation of this policy. This policy made possible the relaxation of armed struggle in solving issues pertaining to the

country's development and created the peaceful manner of competition between different forces including political and parliamentary struggles."

The main and important direction of this policy is spearheaded to ensure the maximum favourable conditions for the return of Afghans, who are living abroad as hostages.

Multi-party system in our political life, coalition in the society and multi-sector economy and their organic combination with a powerful central sovereignty and traditional forms of self-governing, reflect our understanding about social and state structure of contemporary Afghanistan", Najibullah stressed.

Showing political flexibility we have tried several times to start constructive dialogue with the leaders of the irreconcilable opposition. It has been proposed to them to open their political representations in Kabul and participate in formation of parliament and a coalition government, undoubtedly in case of refraining from forms of armed struggle. But the other side in reply to our initiatives wants to disturb the process of national reconciliation and prolong war and fratricide in the country by putting forward unacceptable demands.

We, President Najibullah added, have compromised in a great extent in the time of national reconciliation, but we may never retreat from the gains of the people for democratic rights and the stand of Afghanistan as a sovereign, independent, neutral and non-aligned state. We announce with full decisiveness that we may never trade on the principles and national interest of the country. And will not do this in the future.

The realization of the Geneva accords on the solution of external aspects of the "Afghanistan issue" will obtain a special position.

The agreements reached in Geneva, which is the main result of the constant struggle of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union for cessation of outside interference in the internal affairs of the country give the Afghans the right to choose their political system by their own will.

The leadership of Afghanistan will realize in the best manner the commitments under the Geneva agreements and wishes the same from the other concerned countries.

The state of the Republic of Afghanistan is ready to provide ever more facilities for the return of the emigrants in the provinces bordering Pakistan and study the question of creation of a non-military line in a certain depth and necessary [words indistinct] case the opposition does not resort to military activities along the line. We expect the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to create such a non-military zone. We are confident that this measure will elevate the level of mutual trust.

The issue of normalization of our relations with Pakistan and finding ways for normalizing the situation along our border with Iran is on the agenda of the day. We are interested to develop our relations with People's Republic of China and expand our relations with the Islamic countries.

Economic development of the country is our important task. Realization of this task is not possible without foreign assistance. In this area we count on support of the United Nations. We want to extend and expand our ties with some developed capitalist countries. No doubts, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries will have the main role in strengthening of international position of Afghanistr , President Najibullah concluded.

Decree on Promotions of Armed Forces Officers

LD252156 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Decree on the promotion of officers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan to the rank of general:

The promotion of officers of the Armed Forces of the Republic Afghanistan to the rank of general is approved in accordance with Article 75 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Promotion to the rank of lieutenant general:
1. Minister of Defense Major General Muhammad Rafi', son of Muhammad Shirin.
2. Republic of Afghanistan Armed Forces Chief of Staff Shanawa Tani, son of 'Abdul Halim.

Promotion to the rank of major general:
1. Republic of Afghanistan Minister of Communications Muhammad Aslam Watanjar, son of Alam Khan.
2. PDPA Central Committee army section chief 'Abdul Haq 'Ulomi, son of 'Abdul Azim.
3. Brigadier General 'Abdul Qader, son of 'Abdul Ghafur.
4. Brigadier General 'Abdul Ra'uf, son of Ghulam Rasul.
5. Brigadier General Abdul Ghafur, son of Muhammad Sidiq.
6. Brigadier General Muhammad Ma'shuq Wahab, son of 'Abdul Razaq.
7. Brigadier General Muhammad 'Aziz Zormati, son of Sayyed Jan.
8. Brigadier General Muhammad Baqer, son of Muhammad Mohsen.
9. Brigadier General Sayyed Kazem, son of Sayyed Muqim.

Promotion to the rank of brigadier general:
1. Brigadier Muhammad Sidiq, son of Muhammad 'Ali.
2. Brigadier (Artillery) Fazl Ahmad, son of Sher Ahmad.
3. Brigadier 'Abdul Ghafur Hamidi, son of 'Abdul Wahed.
4. Brigadier (Tanks) Jandad, son of 'Ali Ahmad.
5. Brigadier Sayyed A'zam, son of Sayyed Pasha.

6. Brigadier Najib Ahmad, son of Muhammad Taleb.
7. Brigadier (Tanks) Muhmand, son of Mir Shah.
8. Brigadier (Communications) 'Abdul Mukhtar, son of 'Abdul Rahman.
9. Brigadier (Logistics) 'Abdul Rahman, son of Baba Sahib.
10. Brigadier (Air Defense) Nurullah, son of Muhammad Amin.
11. Brigadier (Engineering) Muhammad Sarwar, son of Muhammad Rafiq.
12. Brigadier (Tanks) Salahuddin, son of Ghowsuddin.
13. Brigadier (Rockets) 'Abdul Karim, son of 'Abdul Baqi.
14. Brigadier (Medical) Muhammad Aslam, son of Raz Muhammad.
15. Brigadier (Pilot) Khawaja Taj Muhammad, son of Khawaja Nur Muhammad.
16. Brigadier 'Abdul Wahab, son of Saleh Muhammad.
17. Brigadier (Communications) 'Abdul Baqi, son of 'Abdullah.
18. Brigadier 'Abdul Fatah, son of 'Abdul Ghiyath.
19. Brigadier Muhammad Akram Helali, son of 'Abdul Qader.
20. Brigadier Muhammad Karim, son of Muhammad Khan.
21. Brigadier Azizullah Muhmand, son of Sayyed Mullah.
22. Brigadier Faraz Mondozai, son of Wali Jan.
23. Brigadier Juma Muhammad, son of Baz Muhammad.
24. Brigadier Sayyed Gol, son of Muhammad Hassan.
25. Brigadier Waliullah, son of Wali Muhammad.
26. Brigadier Sayyed 'Abdul Qodus, son of 'Abdul Ghiyath.
27. Brigadier Ghulam Sakhi Atmar, son of Muhammad Yusof.
28. Brigadier Khair Muhammad Faqiri, son of Faqir Muhammad.
29. Brigadier Muhammad Sharif, son of Muhammad Akbar.
30. Brigadier Nurullah, son of Muhammad Karim.
31. Brigadier Ghulam Nabi, son of Ghulam Sakhi.
32. Brigadier Muhammad Qasem, son of Sher 'Alam.
33. Brigadier Mir Jamaluddin, son of Mir Jamaluddin.
34. Brigadier Rahmatullah, son of 'Abdul Ra'uf.
35. Brigadier Hayatullah, son of Nasurallah.
36. Brigadier Muhammad Asef Ferozan, son of Muhammad 'Ali.
37. Brigadier Ghulam Dastgir, son of Aqa Muhammad.
38. Brigadier Muhammad 'Omar, son of Muhammd Oasem.
39. Brigadier Muhammad Faruq, son of Muhammad Zarif.
40. Brigadier Muhammad Wali, son of 'Abdul Samad.
41. Brigadier Nasim Gul, son of Shirin Khan.
42. Brigadier 'Abdul Hakim, son of Shah Mardan Qul.

[Signed] Najibullah, president of Afghanistan.

Najibullah Presents April Revolution Awards

LD261727 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] A decree regarding the presentation of the April Revolution Order to officers of the Republic of Afghanistan Armed Forces:

In appreciation of their worthy services for the success of the victorious April Revolution, the April Revolution Order of the Republic of Afghanistan is presented to the following officers:

1. Lieutenant-General Muhammad Rafi', member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee and Republic of Afghanistan defense minister.

2. Lieutenant-General Sayyed Muhammad Gulabzoy, member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee and Republic of Afghanistan interior minister.

3. Lieutenant-General Ghulam Faruq Ya'qubi, member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee and Republic of Afghanistan state security minister.

4. Major-General Muhammad Aslam Watanjar, member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee and Republic of Afghanistan communications minister.

[Signed] Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan

Najibullah Decrees Reduce Prisoners' Sentences

LD262229 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] In accordance with the humane policy of national reconciliation, and on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the glorious April Revolution, Najibullah, president of the Republican of Afghanistan, by issuing separate decrees, approves the remitting and reduction of sentences of prisoners and the abandoning of criminal prosecution against personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan, and those subjects eligible for military service, in accordance with the provision of paragraph 8, Article 75 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan.

In reporting this news to BAKHTAR, the Presidential Office added that these decrees have been issued in the following form, and passed to the respective authorities for implementation:

The decree of the president of Afghanistan on the remitting and reduction of sentences of prisoners on the occasion of marking the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution.

The decree of the president of Afghanistan on halting criminal prosecution against personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan and those subjects eligible for military service.

In view of the humane policy of national reconciliation, and on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution, and in accordance with Paragraph 8, Article 75 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan, criminal prosecution against personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan and those eligible for military service is to be abandoned in the following manner:

Article 1. Those personnel of the Armed Forces who abandoned their units and companies, and escaped from military service, and also those who are being summoned to enter into military service, but have delayed entry to military service, shall be exempt from punishment if they report voluntarily within the specified period from the date of the implementation of this decree to their respective units and companies, or to the organs of state power and administration, to enter into military service.

Article 2. Criminal prosecutions instigated prior to the implementation of this decree against those who are embodied in Article 1, and people under arrest against whom court decisions have not yet been finalized, are to be discontinued and their respective dossiers abandoned.

Article 3. Those embodied in Articles 1 and 2 of this decree should terminate their specified service period or the remaining term of their service in accordance with the law, and are to be pardoned from doing extra periods of service.

Article 4. Those who, in addition to delaying entry into military service, have perpetrated other crimes, will have their crimes considered in accordance with the enforced laws of the country.

Article 5. Implementation of this decree is the duty of the commanders of units and companies of detection organs, investigation sections of prosecution departments, and those courts considering the respective dossiers.

Article 6. Supervision over the careful implementation of this decree is the duty of the attorney general of the Republic of Afghanistan, the Prosecution Department of the Afghan Armed Forces, and the Special Revolutionary Prosecution Office, within their respective fields.

Article 7. This decree is enforcible from 26 April 1988, and will be published in the Official Gazette.

[Signed] Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan

Najibullah Receives USSR's Orlov, Other Guests

LD270839 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0436 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 26, BAKHTAR—The president of the country and the general secretary of the Central Committee of the PDPA, Najibullah, received here on Monday the Soviet delegation headed by V. Orlov, deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and delegations of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Republic of Cuba, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam who had come to Kabul to participate in the 10th anniversary celebration of April Revolution.

GDR Delegation Arrives for Revolution Fete

Attends Kabul Celebration

LD252217 East Berlin ADN international Service in German 1418 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Kabul, 25 Apr (ADN)—The president of Afghanistan, Dr Najibullah, stressed on Monday the important role of the policy of national reconciliation for the securing of peace in the country and in the entire region. He said in Kabul at a ceremony to mark the 10th anniversary of the Afghan April Revolution that this political concept was to an increasing extent becoming the daily practice in the country. [passage omitted]

Numerous foreign delegations took part in the ceremony, among them a delegation from the SED [Socialist Unity Party of Germany] Central Committee. The delegation is headed by Dr Werner Walde, candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee. The events making the anniversary will continue on Tuesday with a mass demonstration in Kabul.

Meets With Keshtmand 25 Apr

LD260129 East Berlin ADN International Service in German 1926 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, 25 Apr (ADN)—The delegation of the SED [Socialist Unity Party of Germany] Central Committee, led by Werner Walde, candidate member of the SED Central Committee Politburo, was received Monday in Kabul by Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Afghanistan and member of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee.

During the exchange of views the development of cooperation between the GDR and Afghanistan was discussed. Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand expressed his satisfaction of the support and solidarity which the GDR has been showing to his country since the April Revolution 10 years ago. Both partners in the talks agreed to continue the successful cooperation between states and peoples.

Werner Walde discussed the new initiatives by the GDR to consolidate peace, as in the international meeting for nuclear weapons-free zones, to take place in Berlin at the invitation of Erich Honecker, and the joint appeal by the SED, CPCZ [Czechoslovak Communist Party], and the SPD [Socialist Democratic Party of Germany] on the immediate elimination of chemical weapons.

Holds Talks With Najibullah
LD261924 East Berlin ADN International Service in German 1418 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, 26 Apr (ADN)—Dr Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the country, on Tuesday received in Kabul a delegation of the SED [Socialist Unity Party of Germany] Central Committee under the leadership of Werner Walde, candidate member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the SED, for a friendly discussion. Werner Walde conveyed the warm greetings of Erich Honecker, general secretary of the Central Committee of the SED and chairman of the Council of State of the GDR, which were reciprocated with the same warmth.

The partners to the talks exchanged views on current questions of international development and the policies of their parties. Werner Walde described the implementation of the decisions of the 11th SED Party Congress and particularly stressed the GDR's initiatives in guaranteeing peace and security.

In this connection, he explained the concerns of the international meeting for nuclear weapons-free zones, which will convene next June in Berlin, and conveyed a letter from Erich Honecker to Dr Najibullah, in which an Afghan delegation is invited to the meeting.

Dr Najibullah agreed to the participation of an Afghan delegation at the Berlin meeting. The securing of peace strongly corresponds to the desires of the Afghan people and is an essential component of the national reconciliation policy initiated by the PDPA, the politician emphasized.

This significant political concept displayed its vitality in the signing of the Geneva agreements and in the recently held elections to the Afghan National Assembly. The participation of the population in parliamentary elections, which were the highest in Afghan history, will be the foundation for the formation of a government in which differing political forces in the country will cooperate on a wide basis.

Werner Walde wished the Afghan people success in implementing the national reconciliation policy and assured the people that they can count on the support and solidarity of their friends in the GDR.

Najibullah Receives Kempny-Led CSSR Delegation
LD252015 Prague CTK in English 1831 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul April 25 (CTK correspondent)—Afghan People's Democratic Party General Secretary and President Najibullah today received a Czechoslovak party and state delegation led by Communist Party Presidium member and Czech National Council Chairman Josef Kempny.

The delegation is visiting Afghanistan for the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the April 1978 national democratic revolution.

In a cordial comradely spirit the two representatives discussed relations between the two parties and countries and particularly appreciated the dynamic development of contacts and cooperation in the political sphere.

The supreme Afghan representative spoke about the party's and country's efforts to consistently implement the Geneva accords to ensure peaceful conditions for the life of the Afghan people. He also briefed the guests on the recent successful elections to the Afghan National Assembly.

Josef Kempny assured the Afghan leader that Czechoslovakia supports the policy of national reconciliation which is the only path to a peaceful settlement of the so-called Afghan issue.

He voiced Czechoslovakia's readiness to continue expanding cooperation between Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan in the interest of the people of both countries.

Revolution Messages from USSR, Others Reported
LD270811 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0451 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 26, BAKHTAR—The Central Committee of the CPSU, the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union sent a congratulatory message to Kabul on the occasion of the 10th anniversary celebration of the April Revolution.

Congratulating President Najibullah, Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand and the people of Afghanistan on the occasion, the message says that the policy of national reconciliation announced by leadership of Afghanistan and the constructive and flexible stand adopted by the Republic of Afghanistan for the political solution of the situation around Afghanistan made it possible to find a political solution to one of the most acute regional conflicts.

A new stage has emerged in the Afghan-Soviet relations. The people of Afghanistan can count on the Soviet Union in their just struggle for of a sovereign, non-aligned and neutral Afghanistan in the future as well, the message noted.

On the same occasion congratulatory messages have been sent here by Wojciech Jaruzelski, first secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party and chairman of the Council of the People's Republic of Poland; Fidel Castro, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and head of the state of the Republic of Cuba; the Indian President Vencataranam; Kim Il-song; [Jambyn Batmonh] general secretary of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) and chairman of the People's Great Hural; Dumaagiyn Sodnom, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Mongolian People's Republic.

Stressing on the strengthening of cooperation, and friendship with the Republic of Afghanistan the messages express full support to the realization of the Geneva accords.

Najibullah Chairs Meeting of Democratic Left

LD251844 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 24 Apr 88

[Text] The Coordinating Committee of the Democratic Left held a meeting today in the presidency headquarters. It was presided over by Esteemed Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the Republic of Afghanistan. The meeting was attended by members of the PDPA leadership, the Revolutionary Organization of the Toilers of Afghanistan, Afghanistan's Toilers Organization, and a working group of the Coordinating Council. The leaderships of the Islamic Party of Afghanistan and the Peasants Justice Party were also invited.

At the beginning of the meeting Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan and general secretary of the PDPA, spoke about the achievements of the April Revolution over the past 10 years.

Then Muhammad Wali, official in charge of cadres and personnel of the PDPA, gave a report on preparations made for the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution. Then, honorary medals marking the 10th anniversary of the April Revolution were given to the leaders of political parties. The meeting ended in complete understanding and solidarity.

'Armed Terrorists' Defeated in Golbahar

LD222212 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] A group of armed terrorists belonging to the extremist groups which have been disrupting the security of the Shahi Kowt region and the Golbahar textile mill with subversive actions, were crushed by the country's security forces.

According to a report from the BIA military section Mr Aqa, ringerleader of the terrorists, together with nine of his accomplices, was against peace and tranquility. They were crushed, and their weapons were seized by the country's security forces.

Mujahidin Liberate Qandahar; Soviets Bomb Farah

LD260937 Tehran IRNA in English 0855 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Islamabad, April 26, IRNA—Afghan Muslim revolutionaries liberated Ma'ruf region in Qandahar Province last week, occupying a military post of joint Soviet and Afghan Government forces, said sources close to Afghan mujahidin.

According to another report scores of civilians were killed when Soviet warplanes bombed parts of Farah Province.

Soviet warplanes also bombarded positions of Afghan revolutionaries in Golehki [name as received] region, Farah Province, liberated April 5 martyring seven Afghan mujahidin and tens of innocent people.

Afghan Muslim revolutionaries ambushed a military convoy of the occupying forces killing eight Soviets and destroyed two tanks and military vehicles.

Opposition Islamic Coalition News Conference

NC250755 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] On the eve of 7 Sawr [27 April], the anniversary of the coup by Soviet elements in Afghanistan, members of the Islamic Coalition Council of Afghanistan and groups of Afghan strugglers residing in Iran held a news conference in Qom yesterday, stating their views on Afghanistan's Islamic revolution and the superpowers' agreement in Geneva.

The Central News Unit reports that one of the commanders of the Afghan mujahidin described the unfavorable situation of the joint occupying and state forces vis-a-vis the heroic uprising of the Muslim Afghan mujahidin, saying: While the forces of the Soviet Red Army have been in Afghanistan more than 40,000 officers and soldiers of the occupying forces have been killed or wounded, and 400,000 men of the dying army of the Afghan regime have been killed or wounded.

The same report states that during the news conference one of the leaders of Afghanistan's Nasr organization [mujahidin aid organization] reemphasized the need to continue the liberation struggles by the Muslim Afghan nation and described the Geneva accord as a useless effort by world arrogance. He said: A nation that has given 1 million martyrs for its Islamic and revolutionary ideals will not lay down its arms under any condition or give in to talks with the occupiers or their puppet regime.

A spokesman for the Islamic Coalition Council spoke during the news conference about the council's cooperation with mujahidin groups in Peshawar. He said: After the formation of the Islamic Coalition Council in Iran, new horizons of coordination in all fields, especially politicomilitary, have been created, and the coordinated attacks by Muslim Shi'ite and Sunni brothers against the positions of the joint forces are one clear example of this sincere cooperation. Despite the erroneous propaganda by the enemies of the Islamic revolution, the ranks of the combatant and Muslim brothers grow tighter each day.

In conclusion, a combatant Afghan clergyman spoke about the outstanding role played by the Afghan refugees living in Iran in all-embracing support for the Muslim Afghan mujahidin and praised the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for its principled stands on the Afghanistan issue.

India

Fence Construction on Pakistani Border Begins

BK250332 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Work has begun on erecting barbed wire fencing along vulnerable points on the Indo-Pakistan border. According to BSF [Border Security Force] sources, some areas in Gurdaspur, Amritsar, and Ferozepore Districts have been identified for the purpose.

The Central Public Works Department is executing the work covering about 100 km, and the task will be completed in 2 months. The BSF is also reinforcing its manpower and providing floodlights in these areas considered entry points for terrorists and smugglers.

CPI Resolution Deals With Punjab, China Border

BK240626 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Text] The Communist Party of India has urged the center to convene an all-party meeting immediately to find a political solution for the Punjab problem. Addressing a press conference in Delhi today at the end of the national council meeting, the party general secretary, Mr C. Rajeswara Rao, criticized the government for the delay in convening such a meeting.

In a resolution, the party criticized the economic policies of the government, saying that they have led to unprecedented hike in prices. On Sri Lanka, it said elections to the provincial councils should be held as early as possible.

On the India and China border issue, the resolution said Beijing has made it clear to the party's delegation that the issue can be solved only through mutual understanding.

U.S. Criticized for Closing UN PLO Office

BK2704032288 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] India is in touch with the PLO following the latest developments in West Asia, particularly the assassination of the PLO commander, Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

This was stated at the Consulatative Committee meeting of the External Affairs Ministry in New Delhi yesterday. Members of the committee criticized the United States for ordering the closure of the PLO mission at the UN headquarters.

The minister of state for external afffairs, Mr Natwar Singh, told the meeting that informal discussions have been held with the Iranian and Iraqi leaders for finding a solution to the Gulf war. He said India has an abiding interest in peace and stability in the region.

Karnataka Chief Escapes Unhurt From Attack

BK260302 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The Karnataka chief minister, Mr Ramakrishna Hegde, escaped unhurt when his car was attacked with stones by some persons yesterday at Bhadravati. Mr T. Prabhakar, a Janata Party leader, who was traveling with him, suffered a minor injury. Later, talking to newsmen, Mr Hegde alleged that about 50 Congress-I supporters tried to stop his car and hurl stones.

Earlier, addressing a public meeting at Bhadravati, Mr Hegde defended the populist schemes implemented in Karnataka and said they have helped the poor .

Indefinite Curfew Imposed in Amritsar 27 Apr

BK2704075888 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] In Amritsar, a major portion of the walled city has been placed under indefinite curfew. The curfew was clamped at 0800 [0230 GMT] this morning as a precautionary measure in view of the Amritsar bundh [strike] call for today. The call for the bundh has been given by the Shiv Sena to protest the killing of one of their activists by terrorists yesterday.

Meanwhile, four persons have been gunned down by terrorists in Punjab since last night. One person was killed and two injured, when terrorists opened fire near Tarn Taran railway crossing on the outskirts of Amritsar City early this morning. Two persons have been killed in Jullundur, Kapurthala, and Gurdaspur Districts.

Gurkha 'Militants' Attack Police Party

BK261117 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] A police party was ambushed by GNLF [Gurkha National Liberation Front] militants at Patabang in Darjeeling subdivision yesterday. A senior police official told our Siliguri correspondent today that the police party was attacked with firearms and bombs. There was no report of any casualty.

The police arrested seven GNLF activists from Bhutia Basti in Darjeeling yesterday.

USSR's Kamentsev Discusses Trade With Tiwari

BK260604 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] A high-level Soviet delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Mr V.M. Kamentsev is now on a visit to India. The delegation called on the finance minister, Mr N.D. Tiwari, in New Delhi today.

During the meeting, Mr Tiwari expressed satisfaction over the trade flow between India and the Soviet Union. He said it reached the level of 4,500 crore rupees during 1987 as against the trade (?plan) provision of 3,700 crore rupees. Both the sides also discussed various measures to further increase the bilateral trade.

Computer Cooperation Accord Signed With USSR

BK221644 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 22 Apr 88

[Text] India and the Soviet Union have signed a protocol on cooperation in areas of electronics and computers. They have agreed to carry out preliminary work for setting up joint ventures for production of special telephone exchanges for mines, color TV sets, metal ceramic, and other products. The protocol was signed in New Delhi today.

The Soviet Union has offered to give specifications of two supercomputer models—(Elbos) 3-1 and EC 1068—by the end of July. The secretary in the Department of Electronics, Mr K.P.P. Nambiar, told newsmen that these supercomputers are compatible with the one the United States has agreed to sell to India.

Report on Bofors Deal Exonerates Officials

BK261702 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The joint parliamentary committee [JPC], which investigated the Bofors gun deal, has concluded that there is no evidence of commissions or bribes having been paid to anyone, nor is there any question of any Indian or Indian company, whether resident in India or not getting any payment, especially as no evidence to the contrary is forthcoming from any quarter. The report was laid on the table of the Lok Sabha by the committee chairman, Mr Shankeranand, this evening.

The report, running into 340 pages, says no extraneous factors, kickbacks or bribes influenced the selection of the gun as alleged in the media. It says the committee did not come across any action or decision of any official or member of the government, which could be viewed with the slightest suspicion at any stage of the Bofors contract. The evidence conclusively establishes that the decision to award the contract to Bofors was purely on merit. The gun was sold to India at a price lower than to the Swedish Army.

The report points out that the final recommendation of the negotiating committee to buy the gun was brought to the attention of the then finance minister, Mr V.P. Singh. He expressed no reservations on the decision. The recommendation of the negotiating committee was approved by Mr V.P. Singh on 13 March 1986. In his evidence, the then expenditure secretary, Mr R. Ganapathy, said that if the finance minister had had any doubt at all, he would have asked the finance secretary or him. But no question was raised at any time till Mr Ganapathy's retirement.

The report says the Bofors gun meets all essential, technical, and operational parameters. The committee is firmly convinced that the procedure followed for its selection was sound and objective and the technical evaluation of the various gun systems considered was thorough, flawless, and meticulous.

About the Mayadas committee the report says it clearly exceeded its authority by undertaking a technical evaluation of the various gun systems. It sought to override the recommendations contained in the general staff evaluation of December 1982, which had the approval of the chief of the army staff and his deputy. General Sundarji told the joint parliamentary committee that the Mayadas committee was not truly a technical evaluation committee, but merely a technical group to assist the negotiating committee.

The report says Bofors paid over 319 million Swedish kroners to three companies as winding up charges for terminating agreement for consultancy, marketing, and such other services. However, despite persistent demand from the Government of India, Bofors declined to give details of these payments or their recipients. On available evidence two of these companies appeared to be front agencies established in tax havens.

Mr Win Chadha, who gave evidence before the committee, was asked whether he was aware of the payment of 319 million Swedish kroners to these companies, he replied he did not know anything about it. He also said he did not know whether they had commitments and

what consideration forced them to do so. Mr Chadha reiterated that whatever payments he received came through banking channels with the knowledge of the Reserve Bank.

The committee came to the conclusion that on the basis of evidence tendered by different people, Mr Chadha cannot be described as a middle man between the Bofors an J the Ministry of Defense. The payments received by Mr Chadha up to 1985 were for services rendered during the trials of the gun and negotiations of the contract. The details of the amounts paid to him as given by the Bofors tally with his income tax returns.

The report says the committee sought the help of several investigating agencies of the Government of India to collect evidence. These included the Central Bureau of Investigation, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and the Directorate of Enforcement. The investigating agencies made inquiries both in India and abroad and secured the assistance of the Interpol to obtain maximum possible information.

In a dissenting note, one of the members of the JCP, Mr Aladi Aruna, belonging to the Janaki faction of the AIDMK, has said among other things that the story of no middleman and no payment of commission is unbelievable. He said the claim of winding up charges is also untenable. Mr Aruna records that the payment of 319 million Swedish kroners could only have been made to to an Indian or Indian associates.

The JPC has dismissed the dissenting note, saying it was not (?prepared) to place any reliance on unsubstantiated inferences. It says surmises, conjectures, and suspicions have no place in a report such as this. If a suspicion is allowed to take the place of proof, as Mr Aruna would like the committee to do, it would be travesty of justice. JCP describes Mr Aruna's observations as most unfortunate, unfair, baseless and biased. It says there is not even a shred of evidence to support them

The 35-member joint parliamentary committee was set up in August last year to look into the allegations of kickbacks in the gun deal. It had 50 sittings in all spread over 140 hours. The verbatim record of the proceedings runs into more than 2,000 pages.

As Mr Shakeranand was presenting the report, Mr Madhu Dandavate, raised a point of order on procedural matters. He said more material has come to light on the Bofors deal and wanted to know whether the committee had considered it. The speaker, Mr Bal Ram Jakhar, overruled the objection. A copy of the report was also laid on the table of the Rajya Sabha.

Case Registered Against Former Minister of State

BK261002 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The Rajya Sabha was informed today that the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] has registered a case against the former minister of state for internal security of the Home Ministry, Mr Arun Nehru, and an official in connection with the purchase of Czechoslovak pistols. The case was registered last month and it is still under investigation. Charge sheets have not yet been framed against the concerned persons.

The home minister, Mr Buta Singh, said in a written reply that complicity of other accused persons will be ascertained and verified during investigation of the case. He said samples drawn from the consignment of pistols received from Czechoslovakia were found defective after tests. The government was compelled to cancel the agreement in view of this in November last.

Iran

Saudi Arabia Announces Decision To Sever Ties

LD271050 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] The regime of Hijaz announced last night that its government has decided to sever diplomatic relations with Iran. According to an IRNA report, the regime of Hijaz yesterday summoned the charge d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Riyadh to that regime's Foreign Ministry and informed him of the decision of the Al Sa'ud government to sever relations between the two countries.

Following the announcement of Saudi Arabia's severing relations with the Islamic Republic, REUTER news agency, quoting diplomats, announced: This measure by the Saudi regime is an overt and blatant attempt by this country to calm the tension in the U.S. Congress in the face of the Saudi purchase of Chinese ballistic missiles, and a gesture of reassurance that these missiles will not be viewed as a threat against Israel.

Foreign Ministry Condemns Move

LD271150 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Statement by the Foreign Ministry spokesman regarding Saudi Arabia's announcement to sever relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran—read by announcer]

[Text] After the massacre of the pilgrims to the House of God by the Al Sa'ud regime during last year's hajj, relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and that regime reached their lowest point. The number of our diplomats in that country was reduced to the minimum, while members of the Hijaz embassy had already left Tehran. Because of last year's crimes and that regime's present policy on preventing the entry of Iranian pilgrims to perform their Muhammadan hajj, the Al Sa'ud rulers have been under pressure from world Muslim public opinion. The question asked by the Muslims of the world is: By what right does the Al Sa'ud reduce the number of pilgrims and impose conditions on the manner of performing the pilgrimage.

As the Hijaz regime has not and will not be able to account for this, it seems that, by severing relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, it is trying to highlight the political differences between the two countries as the major reason for breaking relations and to divert the minds of the world's Muslims from its policy of preventing Iranian pilgrims from attending the hajj ceremonies this year—a clear example of blocking the path of God.

Another problem in Saudi policies is the collusion and collaboration of that regime with the U.S. conspiracies in the Persian Gulf. The Al Sa'ud regime, which has given the best financial assistance to the aggressor Iraqi regime and has in reality shouldered responsibility for bearing the cost of Saddam's ferocious aggression, has now adopted a special role in carrying out the White House's projects in the region based on increasing U.S. hegemony over the Persian Gulf and raising the level of tension in the region in order to prevent the fall of Saddam's regime.

The more the reactionary regimes of the region are drawn to U.S. policies and maintain a greater distance from the Muslim nations of the region, the links of the Islamic Republic of Iran with the nations of the region become stronger and more meaningful. In truth, these links and the Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with nations and governments that give priority to what is good for the region rather than what is good for U.S. interests are precisely what guarantees the peace, security, stability, and the independence of the region.

Oil Official Blames U.S.

NC271110 Paris AFP in English 1055 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Vienna, April 27 (AFP)—A senior Iranian official Wednesday blamed Saudi Arabia's decision to break off diplomatic relations with Iran on "pressure" by the United States.

Iranian Deputy Oil Minister Hoseyn Kazempur-Ardabili told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE the Saudi decision, announced in Riyadh Tuesday night, was "taken under the pressure of the United States."

Mr. Kazempur-Ardabili, who arrived here overnight for a conference of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), affirmed that the "aggression" against Iran "has escalated during the last weeks."

He said the latest developments would "lead to increased U.S. military presence in our region" and this would "have an impact on the withdrawal of (Washington's) European allies from the Gulf."

Commentary on Saudi Ties

LD271256 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1108 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Yesterday the regime ruling over the Hijaz announced that it has severed its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and has asked Iranian diplomats to leave that country. Before this official government statement in the Hijaz yesterday, the U.S. newspaper THE WASHINGTON POST, quoting officials in the U.S. Government, wrote that the Al Sa'ud regime had decided to sever relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The announcement of this news in Washington demonstrates that the decision to cut off relations was not one made by the regime ruling over the Hijaz, but was a decision made in the United States within the framework of the policies of Reagan's government. The goal the United States is pursuing by dictating this policy to the Al Sa'ud regime—its main regional servant—is to prevent the participation of Iranian pilgrims in the hajj.

During the past few months, the Al Sa'ud regime has tried to prevent Iranian pilgrims from participating in the hajj and from holding demonstrations disavowing infidels. The high point of these struggles was the meeting of Islamic foreign ministers in Amman, the Jordanian capital, during which the Saudi regime, with the assistance of other reactionary and subservient regimes, was able to influence the contents of that meeting's resolution and gain some concessions. The efforts of the Al Sa'ud court in that session also showed that the Al Sa'ud regime was trying to achieve some Islamic legitimacy for its aims—a legitimacy which was gained in the name of Islam by those anti-Islamic regimes ruling over the world of Islam.

Following the Amman conference, the Saudi court announced that only 50,000 Iranian pilgrims will be allowed to go on the hajj, and forbade any demonstrations disavowing infidels. In order to reduce the number of Iranian pilgrims, the Saudi regime used the excuse that since the beginning of the current year, it has been renovating and expanding various buildings in Mecca, and will not be able to receive a larger number of pilgrims. However, this is a feeble excuse, because in the course of the recent discussions about the Iranian delegation in the Hijaz, it was made clear that the Al Sa'ud court is still prepared to receive 150,000 pilgrims, provided that they do not take part in any demonstrations disavowing infidels. Consequently, the main problem of the regime ruling over the Hijaz is to prevent such demonstrations of pilgrims at the house of God.

The Saudi decision to sever relations proves the failure of the efforts of the Saudi court. By severing relations, the Al Sa'ud court is now trying to achieve a goal that it failed to achieve through political and propaganda means. At a time when it has been made absolutely clear that the regime ruling over the Hijaz is preventing the

Iranian pilgrims from performing their hajj duty, it is up to the world of Islam to remove these obstacles to performing the hajj and to declare the Al Sa'ud regime a corrupt and anti-Islamic regime.

On the other hand, the decision of the Saudi court to sever relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran demonstrates the growth of Islamic movements in the region and the ever-increasing fear of those movements by the United States and the reactionaries. The Muslim Iranian nation has never been subjected to such an onslaught by arrogant and reactionary elements. The recent bullying actions by the United States in the Persian Gulf, which signalled the start of Washington's direct war against the Muslim Iranian people, as well as the actions of some of the reactionary regimes of the region, and now the step taken by the Al Sa'ud court, all demonstrate the alignment of a united front by world arrogance, reactionaries, and international Zionism against the Islamic Revolution due to the heightening and strengthening of the Islamic Revolution and Islamic movement.

Under such conditions, and in view of the expansion of the scope of U.S. aggression in the Persian Gulf region, the regime ruling over the Hijaz is frightened that future pilgrimages will become a focus for opposition to the United States and Israel, that the slogans "Death to Israel" and "Death to America" may be repeated with greater intensity, and that at the hajj congress the world of Islam will announce its anger and revolution against subservient rulers who are traitors to Islam. This would be particularly desirable because at the moment the Al Sa'ud court is trying to fortify U.S. policy in the region, to divert the hostilities against Israel to hostility against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The first and most necessary condition for achieving this aim is to recognize the existence of the Zionist regime and to ignore the Palestinian issue.

The confessions yesterday of Sa'ud al-Faysal, the Al Sa'ud foreign minister, clearly reveal this traitorous role of the Al Sa'ud court. With complete impudence he said that the long-range missiles which have been recently acquired by that regime should not be regarded as a threat against Israel. This green light by the Al Sa'ud court to Israel was announced only a few hours before the official announcement of the severing of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. It shows that the Al Sa'ud regime has been allocated a special place in the American offensive policy in the Middle East, and that regime is given the task of turning hostility to Israel into hostility against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Malekzadegan Discusses Battle With U.S. Forces

LD251032 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0740 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Interview with Commodore Mohammad Hoseyn Malekzadegan, commander of the Navy, by unidentified station correspondent, from the "Armed Forces Program"; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Unidentified correspondent] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings to the dear listeners of the Armed Forces program. Considering the recent U.S. mischief in the strategic Persian Gulf region, we are with Commodore Malekzadegan, the honorable commander of the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. While thanking him, I ask him to describe the aims of world arrogance, the United States in particular under the present circumstances, in its adventurism in creating clashes in the region.

[Malekzadegan] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings to the heroic, brave, and martyr-nurturing nation of our Islamic homeland, and to the pure and ever-glorious souls of the Iranian martyrs. Concerning the aims of world arrogance, it is perfectly clear that world arrogance entered the region because of its world-devouring aims. It has no other goal. What could justify the United States' traveling thousands of miles from its shores, coming to an enclosed gulf, a [words indistinct] gulf, and embark on bullying? Their only aim could be that of world-devouring. Under the pretext of maintaining security and safeguarding shipping and its interests here, it tries to justify its position, (?which is to devour the world).

[Correspondent] Commodore, please give us your views on the epic-making moves and bravery of the self-sacrificing personnel and on the unequal battle between the heroic missile-launching destroyer [as heard] "Sahand," the heroic frigate "Jowshan," and the U.S. warship with its many planes and helicopters, as well as on the battle of the destroyer "Sabalan" in the face of the savage U.S. attack on our country's oil platforms.

[Malekzadegan] What happened at sea on Monday, 18 April, cannot be compared with any sea battle in history. It was a full-scale naval battle against an enemy that was armed to the teeth, a criminal superpower that attacked our naval units by air and sea. The saga created by the brave and self-sacrificing Navy personnel on board those heroic and ever-glorious vessels—the destroyer "Sahand" and the frigate "Jowshan"—was unprecedented in the history of world battles, you can be sure. While it was an unequal battle, our self-sacrificing personnel heroically fought to the last man, the last bullet, and the last drop of blood. They stood up to world arrogance.

I cannot describe, in a few words or a few minutes, the naval battle between our Navy and the U.S. Navy and Air Force [as heard], for our dear nation. God willing, the details of this battle will be published for our future generations, so that they may always be proud of it and of their fathers who fought at sea to defend and safeguard the waters of our Islamic homeland against the superpower enemy. May they use those epics and operations as a great experience and a model. All I can say is that our dear ones at sea fought the criminal superpower in a manner worthy of the Iranian nation. We honor the memory of the dear martyrs of our two naval units, the

heroic destroyer "Sahand" and the heroic frigate "Jowshan." I hope that our dear ones in the Navy will carry on the work of these martyrs strongly and decisively. I am certain that they will confront any other aggression.

[Correspondent] Commodore, regarding the U.S. invasion in the Persian Gulf, Western media have embarked on adverse propaganda about the reduction in the combat and defensive capabilities of the Iranian Navy. As commander of the Iranian Navy, what is your reply to such propaganda by the arrogant media?

[Malekzadegan] I say that if these blowhards and mass media had conducted a brief theoretical—not practical—survey of existing books, they would never have said such things. For our Navy is equipped with light and heavy destroyers, missile-launching frigates of various types, and gunboats. Therefore, if one, two, or three of these units are damaged, how could the Navy lose half of its strength, or—as these mouthpieces have said—lose its readiness or [words indistinct]? This is the question we ask these blowhards.

What I can say is that, not only has this battle had no effect on our combat strength, but it has increased it. The combat strength of a force does not depend on equipment, on two or more warships. It depends on the personnel, those who work on these warships, and engage the enemy. If we were to make comparisons, world arrogance has much equipment and many facilities. We can say this: It is the Navy personnel who make up the Navy's combat strength. Following that heroic battle, their morale has increased considerably. At present, they enthusiastically and excitedly are requesting to engage world arrogance again. Therefore, this high morale, after that heroic battle, is admirable. It shows that with our existing vessels and with our personnel's high morale, not only has our combat strength not decreased, but has increased. God willing, we will demonstrate this at sea in the future.

Therefore, as the official responsible for this force, I say to our heroic and brave nation that the Navy has maintained its strength, that the propaganda of world arrogance will have no effect on our performance, and that all these blowhards have embarked on this kind of propaganda to justify their actions. Relying on God Almighty, and with its combat strength, all the facilities at its disposal, and its pious and committed personnel, the Navy will demonstrate its strength in future battles, God willing.

[Correspondent] We thank you, Commodore, for giving this interview, and pray that the brave and self-sacrificing Navy personnel and other fighters of Islam will be victorious and will overcome world arrogance and the Ba'thist, Zionist regime.

Besharati Comments on Caribbean Tour, Toxic Gas
LD252110 Tehran IRNA in English 1812 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 25, IRNA—Acting Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati arrived here Monday at the end of his three-nation tour of Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela.

Upon his arrival, Besharati in an interview with reporters at Mehrabad International Airport described his talks with officials of these three countries as "fruitful and constructive".

On his talks with Cuban leader Fidel Castro, the acting foreign minister quoted Castro as condemning the U.S. for its occupation of Grenada and its aggressions against Libya and Iran. He also quoted the Cuban leader as criticizing the international bodies for their silence on Washington's aggressive acts.

Besharati said that he had toured the above-mentioned countries to brief Venezuelan, Nicaraguan and Cuban officials on the dimensions of the Baghdad regime's crime in chemically bombing the Iranian-liberated town of Halabjah and on the U.S. naval attack on Iran's oil platforms in the Persian Gulf.

The acting foreign minister said that the U.S. attacks on Iranian oil platforms proved that the Ba'thist regime ruling Iraq is strongly supported by Washington.

Since Governments in the world have been informed of the Iraqi regime's gruesome crime against its own people in the Kurdish town of Halabjah they now better understand Iran's insistance on the need for punishing the aggressor party in the Iraqi-imposed war, he said.

Elsewhere in his interview, Besharati, said that manufacture of chemical arms does not need a sophisticated technology and cautioned that if governments do not denounce the deployment of toxic gases the safety of the whole world will seriously be endangered.

Americans Wounded in 'Encounter' Flown to FRG
LD271117 Tehran IRNA in English 1050 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 27, IRNA—Fifteen U.S. Marines wounded at an encounter with the Iranians at the Persian Gulf on April 18 have been flown to Federal Republic of Germany for treatment. They were previously confined at Al-Salmaniyah Hospital in Manama. The U.S. has not yet disclosed its casualty figures at the encounter.

Bahrain is a U.S. ally at the Persian Gulf and has closely cooperated with the U.S. Navy since the arrival in the waterway of the U.S. fleets.

Commentary on War Issue, Dispatch of Forces
LD261404 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Station commentary: "The War Should Be Taken Seriously"]

[Text] Simultaneously with the dispatch of vast mobilization groups to the battlefronts, yesterday the Supreme War Support Council once again emphasized the need for the swift dispatch of forces to the battlefronts. In the same connection, the chairman of the Supreme Defense Council yesterday said: The movement of people to the battlefronts is good. However, it should continue with greater force. He even asked the young people and those who have been trained and are ready to advance their alloted time for dispatch and to increase and intensify the pace of the dispatch of forces.

The remarks of the chairman of the Supreme Defense Council and the repeated emphasis of the Supreme War Support Council for the swift dispatch of forces to the battlefronts demonstrate the determination of the Islamic Republic of Iran to intensify military operations and increase the pressure on the enemy on all fronts. The government's general policy regarding the imposed war during the current year is one of repeated, continuous blows. In order to achieve this goal, the people must pay greater attention to the events at the battlefronts and the number of forces going to the battlefronts must be increased. If military commanders have large numbers of people at their disposal, they will be able to better implement operational plans. The importance of the implementation of the policy of repeated, continuous blows lies in the fact that it will decide the fate of the imposed war more quickly.

The 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime, with the support it receives from world arrogance and regional reactionaries, is trying to force the Muslim Iranian nation to surrender through its attacks on civilian targets or through the greater use of chemical weapons. The extent of the atrocities of that regime in the war of the cities revealed that the superpowers and the real merchants of death have placed an infinite quantity of weapons and ammunition at the disposal of that regime. Moreover, the superpowers follow a basic policy that in the imposed war Iraq should not be defeated.

At the same time, the events of the past 2 months were very revealing and enabled the Muslim Iranian people to fully appreciate the importance of the present situation. The unending firing of Soviet-made missiles on the cities of our country demonstrated that the Eastern superpower has placed limitless weapons at the disposal of the 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime so that through its atrocities it can tip the balance in its own favor. Moreover, U.S. political and military efforts demonstrated Washington's efforts to achieve the same position for the 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime. While Reagan's administration during the past 2 months had blocked any effort by the Security Council to condemn the 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime for using chemical weapons or attacking civilians, it even resorted to taking action against the Islamic Republic of Iran by attacking our oil platforms, thus entering into direct confrontation with the Muslim Iranian nation. The U.S. Government's conspiracy in providing military support for the 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime as demonstrated in the course of the attacks on Al-Faw provide yet another proof of Washington's policies on the imposed war.

Under conditions when the two superpowers have simultaneously increased pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran, and as it seems that this pressure will continue in the future, the duty of the Muslim Iranian nation is to pay serious and decisive attention to the issue of the battlefronts and to participate in the speedy dispatch of forces.

Within the context of arrogant conspiracies against the Muslim Iranian nation, the 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime has recently announced that it has tested new missiles with longer range capability. Although the truth or falsehood of this claim is not clear, nevertheless the announcement of this fact by the 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime demonstrates that, first of all, that regime has not refrained from crimes and atrocities and that it is still intent on perpetrating greater crimes, and second, the superpowers' animosity and atrocities against the Muslim Iranian nation have reached new heights and they have called for greater bloodshed and crimes by the 'Aflaqi Iraqi regime.

While our enemies are threatening the Muslim Iranian nation with the continuation of their crimes, and while the criminal Iraqi regime knows no limit to its atrocities, and under conditions where international organizations—particularly the UN Security Council—unmindful of these events, continue their inactive policies, it becomes quite clear that, first of all, it is up to the Muslim Iranian nation to defend itself and to confront these atrocities; and, second, to neutralize arrogant conspiracies with the swift dispatch of forces to the battlefronts, thus placing highest priority on the issue of the imposed war. Therefore, the issue of the war and dispatch of forces should be taken very seriously. We should rise with determination, with greater determination than we have already shown, in order to safeguard the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Commentary on U.S. Protection of Gulf Shipping
LD231337 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1102 GMT 23 Apr 88

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] According to some news and published reports, the Reagan administration has been studying a proposal to extend its protection of Kuwaiti vessels to include military protection of non-Kuwaiti vessels and to naval vessels that do not carry the U.S. flag. It is noteworthy that for some time before this, similar news reports were

published in the American press, thus eliciting outright denials by the White House and "no-comments" by the U.S. War [as heard] Ministry.

This time, however, the White House spokesman has explicitly claimed that he has no knowledge of this and, at the same time, many news reports have been issued on this subject and relevant discussions. AFP, for instance, recently reported that U.S. State officials yesterday recalled that the U.S. Navy will henceforth assume responsibility to protect any merchant ship—except those of the two belligerents—if they are attacked in the waters of the Persian Gulf.

In any case, the point is that if the U.S. Administration, in accordance with its own claim, is really worried about the danger caused to international shipping and if it really wants to provide security to merchant and non-military vessels, then, taking note of Iraq's unilateral insistence on attacking merchant vessels, the only way to restore security and tranquillity in the region is to halt the mischiefs of the Iraqi regime. Protecting Kuwaiti oil tankers or implementing projects such as the one put forward by U.S. circles only give greater protection and backing to the Iraqi regime. The Islamic Republic has persistently supported any plan to restore general security and tranquillity by the countries of the region themselves.

At the same time it should be noted that the issue of security and tranquillity has never been analyzed. In other words, providing security to Iraq's supporters and creating insecurity and tension for other countries is a conspiracy, from the point of view of the Islamic Republic of Iran. And this conspiracy will be confronted (?by the Islamic Republic) with severity. Moreover, it is evident that ignoring realities such as these will not only disrupt security in international waters but will, at the same time—just as the experience of protecting Kuwaiti ships has demonstrated—increase tension and instability. It could also possibly lead to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and a conflagration in the whole region.

Therefore, it is fitting that the Reagan administration and the countries of the Gulf littoral, taking note of the explicit and determined decisions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, refrain from intensifying tension and instability in this sensitive region, which will surely have harsh consequences for the world.

Commentary on U.S. Projected Plans in Gulf

LD261632 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1111 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Political commentary]

[Text] In the wake of the reports on the U.S. plan to expand its military support for Kuwaiti ships, Frank Carlucci, the U.S. war minister [title as heard], left for Brussels yesterday in order to discuss the plan with other NATO members at the NATO conference. In addition to this, according to remarks made by some U.S. officials, the U.S. Government and Congress are currently holding talks on this plan. In view of the dangerous nature of such a plan, the Reagan government is trying to win the support of Congress, in addition to winning the support of NATO members. For, should Congress refuse to agree and NATO refuse to coordinate on such a course of action, the Reagan government would face some fundamental and serious difficulties. This is particularly important as the fate of such a plan and its probable consequences would to a great extent affect the course of the presidential election campaign inside the United States.

The fact that the U.S. officials keep stressing that this plan is only being studied indicates that the Reagan government, even in the last year of its presidential life, is striving to expand Washington's military support for the Saddam regime and as far as possible to cover up the disgrace of the aborted McFarlane mission. The delay and hesitation of the Reagan government, however, and the many consultations held in this connection demonstrate the fact that in view of the experience gained in Vietnam and Lebanon and faced with the determination of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Washington understands the grave consequences of such a plan and its dimensions. Therefore, it is trying to involve other NATO members and is going to pave the way for implementation of such a plan by stressing the need for more extensive participation by the European governments.

However, contrary to the dream of U.S. statesmen, strengthening the arrogant front and involving other NATO members will not bring any fundamental or decisive change in the ultimate fate of such plans. First of all, the arena of confrontation with the Muslim nations is not limited to the Persian Gulf region alone; and second, the practical experience gained by the Muslim nation in this confrontation can manifest itself in forms more complicated than the classic capabilities of Western military men.

In any case, Washington's European allies and all members of the U.S. Congress should note that increased hostility against the Islamic Republic of Iran and further escalation of tension in the sensitive region of the Persian Gulf can actually lead to more bitter and crushing consequences for them, more bitter than their experience in Vietnam and Lebanon.

WIH Denies Shelling Iraqi Residential Areas

LD261851 Tehran IRNA in English 1840 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 27, IRNA—A spokesman for the War Information Headquarters today categorically denied Iraqi allegations that Iran's artillery had shelled residential areas in Basra, Al-Sulaymaniyah, and Darband-e Khan Tuesday.

The spokesman said Iran has reiterated time and again that it only retaliates Iraqi missile and air attacks on civilian quarters by attacking enemy eco-military centers.

This policy of the Islamic Republic, he stressed, is unchanged, adding that this time too, after Iraq stopped its military attacks on Iranian cities, "we have not fired even a single shell on Iraqi cities."

The spokesman said despite Iran's halt to attacks on Iraq's eco-military sites, "Saddam's aggressive regime" chemically attacked several Arab-populated villages in Khuzestan Province, in southern Iran last week. It also subjected the port city of Abadan (in the same province) to its artillery fire over this period as a result of which scores of civilians in the city were wounded and residential quarters, shops and educational centers damaged.

"Experience tells us that Iraqi attacks on civilians and non-military centers are resumed days or even hours after a halt is declared to such attacks by the Baghdad regime," the WIH spokesman pointed.

He emphasized that Iraq's "baselss allegations" on Iranian attacks against Basra, Al-Sulaymaniyah and Darband-e Khan aimed at preparing the ground for the enemy's continued mischief in attacking Iran's civilian areas.

Addressing international organisations, the WIH spokesman said "your silence vis-a-vis Baghdad's crimes in attacking civilians and chemically-bombing cities, would undoubtedly encourage Saddam's aggressive regime to continue its mischiefs."

The WIH official urged these organisations to "break your silence and condemn the aggressive regime of Iraq for its crimes."

"Our Islamic combatants are ready to teach unforgettable lessons to the aggressive regime of Saddam," the spokesman said in conclusion. "If Iraq resumes attacks on civilians it will sustain heavy blows in our retaliatory operations."

Communique No 3,184 Details Recent Fighting

LD261617 Tehran IRNA in English 1540 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 26, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters heavily bombed Iraqi positions and troop concentration sites in the Al-Faw operational theater Monday, inflicting substantial casualties and losses on the enemy. All fighters returned safely to bases after successfully carrying out their mission which took place at 05:55 hours local time (02:25 GMT)

The 3184th Joint Staff communique, announcing the above, here Tuesday, added that the Islamic Republic Air Force's successful tactical measures foiled enemy threats to the country's airspace yesterday.

Iran's naval gunboats, in addition to escorting Iranian ships, carried out their routine patrol missions in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman Monday, controling shipping in the waterway.

On the battlefields, Iranian artillery fire pounded Iraqi positions in Chazabeh, southern sector, and forced enemy patrol units to flee in Mehran and Nahr 'Anbar, western sector, yesterday, inflicting several casualties and losses on the enemy.

Iranian Gendarmerie forces heavily shelled Iraqi positions in parts of the southern and western fronts Monday, halting enemy engineering operations and inflicting heavy losses on them, concluded the communique.

Opposition Statement Condemns U.S. 'Sea Piracy'

LD251837 (Clandestine) Radio of the Iranian Toilers in Persian 1530 GMT 25 Apr 88

[Text] A statement from the Central Committee of the Fada'i-ye Khalq-e Iran Organization [CCFKIO], Majority Wing, about U.S. piratical aggression in the Persian Gulf:

On 17 and 18 April 1988, the U.S. military forces stationed in the Persian Gulf attacked two oil platforms and two destroyers [as heard] of the Iranian Navy. These piratical operations were launched under the pretext that a U.S. ship had hit a mine at sea and had sustained damage. Reagan and his NATO allies, all birds of the same feather, issued orders for this aggressive act and directly supervised its implementation.

The CCFKIO, Majority Wing, strongly condemns this sea piracy and considers it to be a barbaric act of aggression against an independent country and a destructive attempt to escalate the crisis in the Persian Gulf. We call upon all international forums and the UN secretary general to use all possible means to prevent a repetition of such an atrocity. It is particularly significant now to (?control) U.S. imperialism, which (?seizes) every opportunity to intensify its military operations and the war of the Persian Gulf. Silence in the face of this piracy is unacceptable and cannot be justified.

The CCFKIO, Majority Wing, holds the Islamic Republic Government, and Khomeyni himself, responsible for the continuation of the war between Iran and Iraq. The continuation of the war—in addition to being the biggest crime against the people of Iran and Iraq and the main factor for the daily massacre of hundreds and thousands of innocent people and the destruction of the two countries—has prepared the ground for U.S. imperialism and its NATO allies to exploit the situation and to turn the Persian Gulf into an arena for their military forces. The

adventurist act of attacking neutral countries' ships is contrary to the national interests of all the Persian Gulf states and a serious threat against global security. We have repeatedly stressed the need to halt immediately any military operations against ships, including any mine-laying in the Persian Gulf.

The Fada'i-ye Khalq-e Iran and other progressive forces of our country are struggling for a prompt cease-fire and termination of the war. We have always favored a rapid withdrawal from the occupied territories on both sides, including evacuation of Al-Faw and Halabjah. Any attack on nonmilitary targets, missile strikes on and bombing of cities, and any deployment of chemical weapons is a horrific crime. We strongly condemn these atrocities and demand the implementation of Security Council Resolution No 598, and also demand that further international pressure should be exerted on the side which refuses to accept this resolution. So far, the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran has refused to accept a cease-fire.

We demand an immediate withdrawal of the occupying forces of U.S. imperialism and its allies from the Persian Gulf, prevention of a repetition of any aggreessive act in the Gulf region, and provision and supervision of safe shipping by a UN supervisory force. The hands of U.S. imperialism should be cut off from the Persian Gulf. Death to war and the warmongers. Long live peace.

[Signed] The CCFKIO, Majority Wing, 19 April 1988

Nepal

Prime Minister Receives PRC Trade Official

BK200100 Hong Kong AFP in English 2220 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Kathmandu, April 19 (AFP)—Chinese Vice Minister for Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Lu Xuejian met Nepalese Premier Marich Man Singh Shrestha here Tuesday, state-run Radio Nepal said.

A source at the Chinese Embassy here said the two men discussed a wide range of topics but added that their talks focused on bilateral trade relations and economic cooperation aimed at developing Nepal's industry.

Mr. Lu also met Nepalese Minister for Water Resources Yadav Prasad Pant for talks on harnessing mountain rivers for hydro-electricity purposes, the embassy source said.

The Chinese official arrived here Saturday at the head of a 12-member delegation.

Mr. Lu, in talks with Minister for Commerce Parshu Narayan Chaudhary, reportedly expressed interest in setting up a joint venture firm to produce leather goods, a Commerce Ministry sources said.

Mr. Chaudhary sought China's cooperation in narrowing the trade deficit between the two countries which is massively in China's favour, the sources said.

The Chinese official has also told Nepalese leaders that China is interested in seeing a development of two-way overland trade between Nepal and Tibet.

Pakistan

Fighting Closes Afghan Border at Torkam

OW2704010388 Tokyo KYODO in English 2324 GMT 27 Apr 88

[Text] Islamabad, April 27 KYODO—The Pakistan-Afghan border at Torkham has been closed following fierce fighting between Afghan guerrillas and government troops, reports reaching here said.

A group of Pakistani journalists en route to Kabul at the invitation of the Kabul government to cover events commemorating the anniversary of the revolution Monday night were forced to return to Peshawar due to fighting on the road leading to the Afghan border city of Jalalabad.

A large contingent of Soviet-Afghan troops stationed at Samarkhel near the Pakistan border was withdrawn to Jalalabad only last Saturday. Reports from Peshawar said gunfire was heard coming from the Pakistani border check post at Torkham.

Afghan security guards at the checkpost on the Afghan side said the border was ordered closed for two days by the Kabul government in connection with the 10th anniversary of the Afghan revolution.

Sri Lanka

Jayewardene Hopes LTTE To Surrender 'Soon'

BK261300 Colombo LANKA PUWATH in English 1035 GMT 26 Apr 88

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, April 26 (LANKA PUWATH)—Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene addressing provincial council election meetings, at Polonnaruwa end Bakamuna on Sunday said that the LTTE were on their last legs and expressed the hope they would surrender soon, states a news report in today's DAILY NEWS.

He said the Tigers could not fight the Indian forces, they would be destroyed. Gradually they'd ask for pardon. Then there will be peace. Every group undertook to accept the accord. But later the LTTE went back on its word and violated the accord. The intention was to hold elections last December in the nine provinces and these PC's [provincial councils] would have begun functioning before April. But the LTTE violated the accord and are fighting the IPKF for the last six months. Very soon the

LTTE will be defeated and we can live peacefully. These Tigers, the president said, had killed Indian and Sri Lankan soldiers and innocent civilians. That is the way of the terrorists.

In Sri Lanka we have Sinhala terrorists [Janata Vimukti Peramuna] also. We have to wage a fight against them. They had killed one at the Katunayake Air Force base and stolen guns. We have to fight them too. Like the Tigers in the north, who first attacked the police and defeated them, they tried to do so in the south too.

The police cannot fight these terrorists alone. They were not trained for combat. They were used for ensuring peace only to investigate complaints about offences that are committed, to arrest all those involved and charge them.

Therefore when the northern terrorists began to attack the police with sophisticated weapons, the police alone could not meet the situation. Police stations in Jaffna were closed and the Army moved to Palaly and Jaffna. But by then the entire Jaffna Peninsula was in the hands of the Tigers. The Army was sent weapons, food, clothing etc. [words indistinct] by attacking and taking over police stations, frightening MP's [members of parliament] and officials, making Ruhuna their headquarters and gradually coming to Colombo.

"We got that information and when Mr Rajiv Gandhi agreed to help us in the north against the terrorists I said 'all right' and signed the accord."

The accord provides for me to invite the Indian Army. I said: "Now is the time to do so. If you bring your army to the north I can take my army to the south. The terrorists were waiting till I got stuck in the north to attack us in the south. So if there is peace in the north I can bring my army to the south."

He agreed. Unfortunately, the LTTE which first accepted the accord later violated it. By then however the Indian Army had arrived. On the day the accord was signed there were big disturbances in the south, the president said.

"I don't know whether it took place here but I know that a certain group tried to come to president's house. They came up to fort. From the south, they came up to the Wellawatte bridge. They came near the tall Bank of Ceylon building near president's house. They were stopped by the bank's security men. If they came to president's house there was a possibility that the government would fall. Fortunately they were stopped there.

"As Mr Gandhi promised to bring his armies to Jaffna, it became possible for me to get down 4,000 of our troops to Colombo and send them to the south. I got them down in one night to Colombo. Rajiv Gandhi assisted us with helicopters and planes to bring them down. Today the Army was assisting the police to meet the situation," the president said.

The government was thus able to tide over the situation due to the assistance promised and given by Rajiv Gandhi. It is our duty to thank him not to criticise or abuse him or criticise the IPKF.

"Who does not have faults? Everyone has. If there is anyone without faults he can cast the first stone at me," the president said quoting from the Bible.

The president went on to say that it was he who had been entrusted with the safety of the country as president. "That responsibility I will discharge till my last day", he said amidst applause.

"That could be taken away from me only with the help of a bomb. Now three attempts had been made on my life. The last was the Parliament bomb explosion. That is why I have said that the terrorists cannot kill me until I finish doing my duty. We will all die some day. I will die, you all will die and the terrorist will die. But it is after doing my duty, ensuring peace in this country."

He reiterated that he signed the peace accord to save this country—the Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim people. "If the terrorists win it will be an end to the democratic freedoms we enjoy. All of us in the UNP may die one day but our political doctrine will not die. What is the doctrine? Democracy, free elections and ruling the country through non-violence. All races should live together in amity, though they may follow different religions."

Terrorists don't think like that. They say you should listen to them, otherwise you'll be killed. They may try to kill the gun and bullet. [sentence as received] The UNP cannot and will not allow that. It is the UNP alone that is facing the challenge and fighting the terrorists.

These terrorists, the president said, tried to kill Mrs Bandaranaike in 1971. It was because of a UNP youth that she was saved. Today she has forgotten those things. She worked together with them at the 1970 elections. After the election, within an year they attacked her government. Now too they have joined hands to come to power. If they come to power, Mrs Bandaranaike's government will be destroyed. "It is the UNP government, its youth, ministers and MPs who are protecting Mrs Bandaranaike and the SLFP'ers [Sri Lanka Freedom Party]—not as SLFP'ers but as Sri Lankans. That is why the people should go and vote."

If the UNP is able to win these four provincial councils it will give us greater courage. So vote for the UNP to drive the last nail into the JVP coffin.

6 'Terrorists' Arrested for Attack on Air Base

BK261321 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 26 Apr 88

[Text] The Chilaw police believe that they have made a major breakthrough in the investigations on the Katunzyake airport base attack last Friday [22 April], and they have apprehended 6 southern terrorists, including a woman, with six shot guns, five cartridges, four Kris knives, nine cutting (?saws), and six black handgloves. They also seized 3 torch lights, 2 typewriters, 10 T-shirts, along with one Hero bicycle.

Official sources told LANKA PUWATH that one airman attached to Katunayake airport base has been taken into custody and [is] in interrogation. Twelve terrorists who were captured during the attacks gave details about the operation and the names of the southern terrorists, who brought instructions to them for the raid from the leadership of the JVP [Janata Vimukthi Peramuna].